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A sheet from Samuel Palmer's 1824 sketchbook, one of 207 drawings on show at the British Museum until August 19: reproduced from the catalogue, *Master Drawings and Watercolours in the British Museum*, edited by John Bowland (208pp. British Museum Publications, £12.95) 0 7141 0797 2

The threat of destruction

Michael Ignatieff

ANDRÉ GLUCKSMANN

La Force du vertige 332pp. Paris: Grasset. 224631051 2

DIETER LUTZ
Welikrieg wieder wollen? Die Nuklearkraft in und für Europa (ein Beitrag zur Diskussion um den nachrüstungsbeschluss) Frankfurt: Rowohlt. Paperback, DM10.80.

MICHEL TATU
La Bataille des euromissiles 120pp. Paris: Seuil. 59fr. 20206633 5

JOHN J. MEARSHEIMER
Conventional Deterrence 296pp. Cornell University Press. £25. 00814 1569 1

SVERRE LODGAARD and MÆRK THEE (Editors)
Nuclear Disengagement in Europe 271pp. Taylor and Francis. £17. 085066 244 3

The plateau d'Albion is one of those austere beautiful places in north-eastern Provence where the lavender fields of the Mediterranean meet the foothills of the Alps. If you happen to be hiking there, the chances are that you will come upon a clearing among the scrub oaks and find yourself face to face with a barbed wire fence and a sign warning that if you approach nearer, automated machine-gun fire will open up. You will have stumbled across France's nuclear deterrent. There are no baby clothes strung out along the barbed wire, no encampments of women and children, no reporters, no detachments of police. Some of the eighteen missile sites on the plateau do not appear to be guarded by human beings at all.

The silence on the plateau d'Albion is a testament to the political foresight of the spirit who seems to hover over these deadly clearings. By taking France out of the Nato military command structure in 1966, by barring American missiles from French soil and by ordering the construction of these silos, Charles de Gaulle - alone among the European leaders of his era - bequeathed a social consensus on defence to his heirs. It is this consensus which guards the clearings.

In the 1970s, the consensus acquired unexpected allies among the General's old antagonists. The Socialist and Communist parties both reversed their earlier opposition to the French *force de frappe*, and, most surprisingly of all, the anti-American, anti-Gaullist intellectuals of the Left rallied to the missiles on the plateau d'Albion on the tidal wave of their disgust and disillusion with the Soviet system after Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan, Poland and "l'effet Solzhenitsyn".

To English and American outsiders, this late wave of disillusion was a puzzling phenomenon. What Simone Weil and other Catholic social philosophers had said about Communism in the 1930s, what Koestler, Orwell and Popper had said in the 1940s, what Trotskyite renegades like Lefort and Castoriadis had said about Stalinism since the 1950s, and what Raymond Aron had been saying all along, the May '68 generation of André Glucksmann and Bernard-Henri Lévy discovered with the force of revelation from Solzhenitsyn in the 1970s. The parochial enmities of French intellectual life had walled the generations off from each other.

With the fervour of late conversion, some *nouveaux philosophes*, notably André Glucksmann, then proceeded to re-discover the merits of traditions they had once treated with scorn: the limited and self-limiting state of liberal theory, the idea of natural human rights, and even that old bourgeois scarecrow, freedom of property. As Glucksmann put it, they discovered that free speech stands a better chance in societies in which the state does not own all the typewriters and printing-presses. Yet this fervent embrace of a liberalism which at its edges shaded into the most extreme anti-Communist reaction left an uneasy impression on bystanders. Watching *la nouvelle philosophie* from afar brought to mind a street performer, tying himself up in chains and then getting you to pay to watch while he wriggled himself out.

La Force du vertige - Glucksmann's polemic

against the European peace movement - continues his escape act from the mind-forged manacles of his own past. In the peace movement's vision of a nuclear-free Europe from Poland to Portugal, Glucksmann senses the fatal allure of the same kind of totalizing vision of the social good as Communism itself. Both visions - perfect and perpetual peace, and the post-capitalist social heaven - produce zealots in their cause, blind moralism in their pursuit, and nihilistic disillusion in the wake of their inevitable failure.

The peace movement's vision of a world without nuclear war has lost touch with the sober and pessimistic realism of that vision of peace incarnated in Grotius and the European natural-law tradition. In that tradition, peace and the human good were defined in purely negative terms, as the social mastery of human violence by law. Grotius believed that peace and war were eternal twins: just as the rule of law is maintained by the discriminate use of judicial violence, so the peace of nations is maintained by the vigilant and discriminate use of armed deterrence. This refusal to chase the chimera of perpetual peace, this abjuring of the utopia of the positive good, enabled Europe to create a civilization which attached unique value to the individual's freedom to name and pursue his own good. Yet this liberty had to live with the constant vertigo of the abyss: the menace of war. Cornille wrote the motto of European liberty when he said, "Alors qu'on sait mourir, on sait tout éviter."

Glucksmann argues that the Soviet Union's rise to strategic parity with the United States and its deployment of the SS20s have shaken the foundations of Europe's Cornelian sangfroid. The peace movement is the beginning of Europe's psychological self-disarmament in the face of the Russian threat. In flocking to the peace rallies and demonstrations, Europeans have shown that they have lost the nerve required to live with the permanent vertigo of an uncertain armed truce. European pacifists cover this moral abdication with proclamations of their commitment to the preservation of human life as the supreme moral value, but this, for Glucksmann, is merely the self-deception of a profound and unavowed moral nihilism. The peace movement actually values nothing higher than its own skin.

This nihilism, he argues, is sustained by an act of willed amnesia towards the horrors of the European past, an amnesia epitomized by the Nuremberg tribunal on nuclear weapons convened by the German Greens and the peace movement in March 1983. The tribunal condemned both the use and the threatened use of nuclear weapons as war crimes equivalent to those perpetrated at Auschwitz. The slippages and betrayals of forgetting here consist not only in making threats of death equivalent to death itself, but in maintaining that the extermination of the six million was simply another horror of war. In an age which must live with the memory not merely of Auschwitz but also of Kolyma (never mentioned at Nuremberg for fear of angering the Soviet participants), there is not one ultimate evil, but two: not only nuclear extermination, but the subjugation of European liberty by the Soviet state; not only death itself, but the death in life of permanent tyranny. If Europe wishes to be neither dead nor red, it must defend itself with weapons which leave the Soviet Union in no doubt that, in extremis, it will chose to be dead rather than red. It must, in other words, embrace deployment of Cruise and Pershing.

Glucksmann does not present a scintilla of evidence that over-running Europe militarily or reducing it to Finlandized client-status is in the Soviet Union's capabilities, plans or long-term interests. Nor does he justify his claim that the European peace movement is prepared to surrender Europe's freedom to the menaces of Soviet weaponry. The mind-forged manacles of *nouvelle philosophie* allow Glucksmann to assume that no analysis of Soviet strategic interests or the peace movement's attitude to Soviet power is actually asked for or required by his readers. Like the speeches of President Reagan and Comrade Chernenko, *La Force du vertige* is a conclusive demonstration that ideological hyper-ventilation is a terrible substitute for sober analysis of intentions and interests.

It is only when Glucksmann switches from

ideological heavy breathing to strategic analysis of weapons systems that his work begins to offer something even to those who disagree with him. When set against Dieter Lutz's case against Cruise and Pershing, Glucksmann does make some useful points. As both he and, in a calmer and more factual way, Michel Tatu, in *La Bataille des euromissiles*, demonstrate, neither Cruise nor Pershing created the possibility of a nuclear war limited to Europe. This possibility has existed since the late 1950s when the Russians developed their first arsenals targeted at Europe, and America responded with Thor and Jupiter rockets stationed in Britain, Germany and Turkey. Europeans have been nuclear hostages for thirty years.

Dieter Lutz in *Welikrieg wieder wollen?* argues that Cruise and Pershing offer American strategic planners the possibility of launching a pre-emptive first strike, aimed at minimizing the damage inflicted by the inevitable Russian riposte. In other words we could slip into nuclear war without wanting to simply because one side, in a time of rising tension, believed that by launching first it could reduce its casualties. Yet nuclear war, like any other kind of war, requires a *casus belli*, and Lutz is no more able to specify a plausible *casus belli* justifying an American first strike, than Glucksmann is able to find a *casus belli* for a Russian first strike. On balance, however, Lutz's arguments, which are intended to make the case against deployment of Cruise and Pershing, work only as arguments for zero option, for the elimination of these missiles on both sides. For as Glucksmann and Tatu point out, American deployment is intended precisely to nullify that first-strike advantage which Lutz believes will lead us into war against our own wills.

Tatu and Glucksmann also make short work of the pacifist argument that the massive overkill of both Soviet and American arsenals dep-

rives the deployment of new intermediate missiles of any rationale. If, in other words, the Polaris can flatten Minsk, why does anyone need another Cruise to flatten the SS20 battery at Ivanovo? The point, however, is that the cost of actually using the blunderbusses in these overstocked arsenals is so high that their credibility as deterrents is undermined. Hence, both sides are driven towards developing precise, low-yield weapons like Cruise and Pershing which can be targeted against military and communications centres.

In a recent series of articles in the *New Yorker* (February, 1984), Freeman Dyson has pointed out that the direction of weapons research on both sides is away from massive and indiscriminately destructive weapons towards ones which can be used without catastrophic consequences. Pacifists and unilateralists may decry this continual search for useable weapons, but it does have the effect of making existing stockpiles of overkill obsolete, and if the trend continues towards smaller weapons with precision targeting it may actually help to reduce the likelihood that humans will destroy the whole planet in a nuclear exchange. The real objection to Cruise and Pershing does not lie in the fact that they are first-strike weapons, but in the fact that they simply do not do what they purport to do. None of the books under review offers convincing proof that either Cruise or Pershing, or the SS 20, for that matter, can nullify the first-strike capability of the other. The best hope for arms control would seem to lie in demonstrating that these weapons cannot actually deliver the deterrence which each side claims for them. On any calculation, the use of these weapons would have unimaginable consequences for the régime foolish enough to fire them first.

Glucksmann fails to see that this erodes their credibility as deterrents. When pacifists evoke the horrific results of their use, they are not



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suffering from some crisis of moral nerve, but merely saying out loud what many Nato military planners already know. Even Henry Kissinger has recently admitted that Nato's nuclear defence strategy is no less incoherent after the deployment of Cruise and Pershing than before. In an article written for *Time* (March 5, 1984), Kissinger tells us that "strategic nuclear parity deprives the threat of strategic nuclear war of much of its credibility: mutual suicide cannot be made to appear as a rational option." Only a defence strategy which does not necessarily entail the destruction of Europe is likely to be credible to the Russians. That means a conventional defence. Glucksman dismisses out of hand the possibilities of a conventional defence against Russian tanks. Yet John J. Mearsheimer's minute assessment of the force ratios in the central European theatre arrives at a relatively optimistic assessment of the ability of Nato's existing forces to contain the only conceivable Russian tactic - a massive blitzkrieg assault aimed at dividing northern and southern Germany in two at Frankfurt. The argument that Mearsheimer presents in *Conventional Deterrence* gains added force when seen against the background of the new precision-guided conventional munitions (PGMS). PGMS are small, relatively inexpensive computer-guided anti-tank and anti-missile systems which have proved themselves already in the Arab-Israeli war of 1973 and which promise in future to give defence a new

edge over offence in ground and aerial warfare.

Freeman Dyson has speculated that such weapons may spell the end of the mass conscription army, since their operation favours a small, professional and technically sophisticated soldiery. Hence they help to overcome the objections to conscription and mass mobilization which were once held to make a conventional defence strategy unacceptable to a European electorate. In the more distant future, these new conventional weapons may even spell the end of nuclear weapons themselves, for their accuracy and highly selective destructiveness credibly demonstrate to the other side that they can be used without catastrophic consequences for the side which uses them.

As a piece of strategic thinking, therefore, *La force du verige* has - like the weapons it champions - begun to be bypassed by the evolution of conventional defence technology. As an analysis of East-West tensions and what to do about them, the book remains deeply mischievous. Glucksman asks us to make support for Cruise and Pershing the proof of our commitment to the lives and liberties of Polish workers, Czech intellectuals and Afghan freedom-fighters. Why are we to suppose that American missiles will do anything for the cause of liberty in the East? The Americans enjoyed a nuclear monopoly in precisely that period between 1945 and 1948 when the Iron

Curtain was laid down across Eastern Europe.

Only one thing is likely to help the cause of liberty in the East and that is a permanent reduction of East-West tensions. Since 1917, the central justification for terror within the Soviet empire has been the threat of the encircling capitalist forces. So long as the Soviet régime can quote chapter and verse from the genial Bourbon in the White House, it can keep its society frozen in its inertial state of security paranoia. What needs to be broken is the ideological cycle in which the Cold War sermonizing of one side reinforces the Cold War sermonizing of the other. It is a pity that Glucksman's work, so full of erudition and invention in some places, simply gives that ineliminable cycle another dreary turn.

Only lasting peace in central Europe is likely to create conditions for evolutionary change within the Soviet system. These conditions are reviewed in Sverre Lodgaard and Marek Thee's *Nuclear Disengagement in Europe*, a study of that poignant trail of good intentions which included the Eden Plan, the Gromyko Plan and the Rapacki plan of 1957. Disengagement of conventional and nuclear forces in the central European theatre, mutual inspection and verification of force levels, and eventually even the creation of a loose federal union of the two Germanys: these are the steps to peace which both sides have known they must take for over forty years. The deployments of 1983 simply put back the day when these steps must once again be taken.

What is striking finally about the French vantage-point on nuclear weapons questions in the extent to which the Gaullist policy of going it alone has enabled the French to drop out of the debate about how Europe as a whole is to

defend itself. Glucksman makes the same ordinary remark that in choosing to adopt Cruise and Pershing, Europeans are deciding their own defence policy for the first time since 1917. What can he mean, when the countries who have accepted them have no operational role, little if any political control on their use, and when the arms talks with the Russians are entirely conducted over European heads?

In retrospect, the five-year battle over missiles was not, as Glucksman portrays it, the beginning of Europe's spiritual and moral armament, but on the contrary, its most determined attempt so far to regain sovereignty over its own defence and to break the super-power stalemate which has held European politics vice since Yalta. Glucksman may not like to see a democratic debate on defence between our divisions to the Russians, but if he does, European liberty as much as he claims, have to live with its most obvious price: the credibility of a democratic society's defence can never be as complete as that of a totalitarian state's. Free citizens disagree, and they disagree on weapons located on European soil, exclude Europeans from the negotiating table, and most important of all, no defence of Europe will be credible to its citizens, or to opponents, if it depends on the assumed destruction of the beloved ground it purports to defend.

Even though the peace movement failed to stop deployment, it has managed to demonstrate three propositions which ought to be a basis for any future debate on European defence: no European defence strategy can enjoy popular legitimacy unless it is a European control; no disarmament negotiations on weapons located on European soil exclude Europeans from the negotiating table; and most important of all, no defence of Europe will be credible to its citizens, or to opponents, if it depends on the assumed destruction of the beloved ground it purports to defend.

Take your partners

Ian Nish

RICHARD J. BARNET
Allies: America, Europe and Japan since the war
511pp. Cape. £16.
024 021273

President Reagan's recent talks in Peking with leaders of the People's Republic of China followed soon after the state visit to China in March of Mr Nakasone, the prime minister of Japan, who offered his hosts low-interest loans amounting to \$2 billion dollars for use in pursuing their modernization programmes. These visits are symbols of the theme that this book describes: the waning of the Pax Americana, the world order created by the United States after victory in a world war and in the context of the enveloping cold war. China was originally excluded from the world order but by agreements with the United States of 1972, 1978 and 1982, she is stage by stage being welcomed back. Japan, which was originally intended in the scenario of the late 1940s to play the role of the "dutiful daughter", now acts independently, as in the case of the yen credit which is in some respects contrary to American interests. The United States, which for almost a quarter of a century had no formal dealings with the People's Republic, now finds it opportune in an election year to arrange for a presidential visit to Peking. The Pax Americana is not dead; it is changed. American power has declined since the days of her supremacy at the end of the war.

Richard J. Barnett offers what is a remarkably concise and informative survey of America's dealings in postwar international affairs. He gives his book the title *Allies* but recognizes that his is a "story of shifting alliances", not of constant and stable relationships between friends. There is of course no real resemblance between Nato and the American-Japanese Security Treaty. The North Atlantic treaty was in origin a victors' alliance; the Security Treaty was the price which Japan had to pay in order to end the Allied occupation of her islands by the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1951. Within the Nato alliance the partners have different perceptions of the defence issue, different weapon systems and different degrees of "loyalty" to the United States. They have become allies of widely differing kinds. Original-

ly conceived as "a collection of like-minded Nordic peoples" Nato was diversified when it was expanded to take in Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries.

On the Japanese side, it might have been expected that there would be more evident unity of purpose underlying the Mutual Security Treaty. Not so. When Mr Suzuki, then prime minister, signed a communique with President Reagan in May 1981, describing an "alliance", there was an immediate outcry in Japan and he had to recant. Many Japanese hold that the Security Treaty is not an alliance on the ground that it does not impose on Japan a duty to go to the aid of the United States in military sense. More broadly, it is doubtful how long an "alliance" relationship can continue when there is an atmosphere of mutual commercial bickering between two countries. During the 1960s and 70s Japan built up an industries well beyond the absorptive capacity of her own domestic market; it must have been her intention to take advantage of the prevailing free-trade atmosphere to eat into the American market (among others). While the Japanese government has been ready to accept arrangements of restraint in order to preserve friendly relationship with Washington, it is not predicted how long these will continue to support. There is a real question over whether the Security Treaty could survive if the United States embarked on strong protectionist measures.

Mr Barnett gives us a thoughtful and readable study. Being so complex, it is not an easy read for the writer to tell or the reader to follow. Barnett organizes his material well and provides a most readable account. He is strongest on Washington and does not explore the points of Europe and Japan with the same degree of thoroughness. Perhaps, the worst Japan comes off worst: she is less often seen at the centre of the stage after the San Francisco treaty. But the author should have taken more pains to correct the misleading Japanese names such as Higashikuni (p 66) and Koki Hirota (p 70).

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The godly kind

Noel Malcolm

MICHAEL G. FINLAYSON
Historians, Puritanism, and the English Revolution: The religious factor in English politics before and after the Interregnum
209pp. University of Toronto Press. £23.
0820256008

J. T. CLIFFE
The Puritan Gentry: The great Puritan families of early Stuart England
313pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £18.95.
0710200072

S. R. Gardiner's monumental studies of the seventeenth century cast a spell from which historians found it strangely difficult to break free. Behind the political history of England from the reign of James I to the Civil War he saw the two great driving forces of political and religious idealism. The first of these has been taken to bits by a succession of modern analyses of the politics of the Long Parliament, and writers such as Conrad Russell have largely succeeded in exorcising the spectre of the Civil War from the 1620s. But the religious move-

The old faithful

Patrick Collinson

J. J. SCARISBRICK
The Reformation and the English People
203pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £14.50.
0631 134247
ROBERT ASHTON
Reformation and Revolution 1558-1660
503pp. Granada. £18.
0246 106662

In 1964 the author of *The Reformation and the English People* told this reviewer that whereas the disparaging remark of a bibliographer that Fr Philip Hughes's *The Reformation in England* was a Catholic history of the Reformation had once offended him, he now acknowledged the justice of the verdict. Hughes's professional bias diminished his stature and usefulness as a historian. Now, in 1984, J. J. Scarisbrick has himself written, in this published version of his 1982 Ford Lectures, an account of that "supreme event" that in the course of the sixteenth century so profoundly refashioned English civilization which excludes consideration of many things the reader might reasonably expect to find in a book with such a title. On Lollardy there is one paragraph. "Bible, vernacular" rates four entries in the Index. The Marian persecution of Protestants merits seven words: "We today are horrified by the burnings."

Professor Scarisbrick's argument is neatly summarized in his second sentence: "On the whole, English men and women did not want the Reformation and most of them were slow to accept it when it came." Anti-clericalism proves to have been a paper tiger. The evidence of wills and the surviving records of lay religious fraternities (the subject of Scarisbrick's most original and valuable chapter) suggest that early Tudor men and women were heavy investors in religion and in substantial control of their investment. For "the rise of the gentry", like the rise of the middle class or of the bourgeoisie, can be shown to have happened before the sixteenth century. So the Reformation must have been primarily "from above". Even Parliament, at a critical stage of the process, was "rail-roaded", "nobbled", "bamboozled". As for the people, they were robbed; but also turned into "a nation of looters". Yet the capacity of the old faith to sustain and renew itself among some of those same people was very great. The Marian episode was not futile. And like other critics of John Bossy, Scarisbrick is impressed with the strength of the indigenous roots which nourished Elizabethan Catholicism and the continuing Catholic community.

But it is not so much these perspectives which identify this book as a work of religiously motivated scholarship. After all, the "from above" anti-popular character of the Reformation is (over) emphasized by other historians currently at work who are not practising Roman Catholics. Scarisbrick's Catholicism is

ment of "Puritanism" remains too often a mysterious force, conveniently available to explain political developments for which more political history can find no unifying reason. Text books continue to describe Pym as a Puritan; but what evidence do we have for making any such judgment about the nature of his religious beliefs?

Michael Finlayson's book is full of unsettling queries of this sort. But his main attack is framed as a single, large-scale question: why, if Puritanism was so dominant in English politics in the 1640s, was it such a spent force only twenty years later? The question is, in effect, rhetorical, since the one thing Finlayson does not do is to look at what happened between 1642 and 1660. If the book were a straightforward piece of historical interpretation, this hole in the middle might sink it altogether. But it is, rather, a book about interpretations, and the device of foreshortening serves its purpose well. Anti-Catholicism is often counted as a major symptom of Puritanism under James I and Charles I (eg, in the Grand Remonstrance): Finlayson juxtaposes the anti-popery of this period with that of post-Restoration England, and persuasively argues for a strong con-

tinuity between them. We do not invoke "Puritanism" to account for anti-Catholicism in the 1670s; do we need it to explain earlier expressions of the same attitude?

When we have disqualified, as sufficient evidence of Puritanism, political demands for anti-recusant action at home and anti-Catholic policy abroad, we are still left with a major manifestation of "Puritanism" to explain: the growing movement of hostility to the Laudian church in the period from 1625 to 1642. Here Finlayson follows the line taken by Nicholas Tyacke: Laud was the innovator, and his opponents were simply trying to reassert the status quo. That this is true of some of his opponents is undeniable; but it would be odd to suppose that just because some anti-Laudians were not Puritans, Puritanism can therefore be virtually written out of the political history of this period. To frame criticisms of the church as complaints against "innovations" was often just good tactics, comparable with framing criticisms of the King's policies as complaints against the unauthorized connivings of his ministers.

Finlayson does not explain why attacks on Laudianism often proceeded to denounce features of the church which had been in existence long before the career of William Laud. At times he is content to let this argument hang on the coat-tails of his argument about anti-popery. Even where Laud's innovations are concerned, this involves taking on trust a lot of the contemporary rhetoric about the crypto-Catholic nature of "Arminianism". But when we find, for example, the Root and Branch Petition complaining that "the Liturgy for the most part is framed out of the Romish Breviary", we cannot simply explain this as an expression of normal anti-Catholicism; to be anti-Catholic may have been normal, but finding the Book of Common Prayer unacceptably close to Catholicism is one of the things historians have been referring to when they have talked about the special nature of Puritanism. This book is often least satisfactory at points

Publication began with the Spring issue of this international quarterly magazine with colour illustrations, for scholars and connoisseurs.



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FROM
IRISH ARTS REVIEW
CARRICK-ON-SUIR • IRELAND

Tremendous words and their effects

Michael Mason

TESS COSSLETT (Editor)
Science and Religion in the Nineteenth Century
 249pp. Cambridge University Press. £22.50
 (paperback, £7.95).
 0 521 24402 1
 SALLY SHUTTLEWORTH
George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Science:
 The make-believe of a beginning
 257pp. Cambridge University Press. £20.
 0 521 25786 7

Both these books deliver something more specialized than their titles might suggest. In the case of Tess Cosslett's book the restriction of focus is perfectly reasonable; not so for Sally Shuttleworth's. *Science and religion in the nineteenth century* overwhelmingly implies just two kinds of science: geology and natural history. Dr Cosslett has brought together in this anthology extracts from Robert Chambers, Hugh Miller, Darwin and Tyndall, together with theological pieces on the physical and biological history of the world by Paley, Charles Goodwin (the contributor on this subject to *Essays and Reviews*) and Archbishop Temple. This is not a large body of examples, but they are well placed in the context of nineteenth-century science and theology through Cosslett's introduction and notes, and in this commentary "theology" is understood in a helpfully broad way: to include Non-

conformity and Catholicism. Perhaps the only author — one who is necessarily much alluded to by Cosslett — whose absence from the text section may make the user of this volume feel thwarted, is Charles Lyell.

The book is part of an interesting publishing venture. Entitled "Cambridge English Prose Texts", this is a series of anthologies of extracts relating to particular episodes, generally marked by controversy, in English intellectual history from the seventeenth century onwards. There is something of a bias towards the literary; two of the forthcoming titles will be "Romantic Critical Essays" and "Victorian Criticism of the Novel". These do not sound very exciting, let alone new, but Marilyn Butler's collection on the "Revolution Controversy" (to include Burke, Paine and Godwin) should be the kind of volume to justify the project. Already published is *The Evangelical and Oxford Movements*, edited by Elisabeth Jay (reviewed in the *TLS*, May 13, 1983).

Intellectual controversies of the past have a way of becoming severely simplified, in the minds of later generations, both in respect of actual positions and issues, and in respect of their rhetoric. Cosslett is very alive to the opportunity of redressing this effect which her enterprise offers. It is predictable that the 1860 British Association debate on Darwinism should be central to her anthology; what is less expected, and extremely worth while, is the complete laying out of the evidence on what

Wilberforce said, how Huxley replied and how the two speeches were received. Using Leonard Huxley's 1903 account as her primary text, Cosslett makes it very clear that this legendary moment remains an enigma in its details. What a contemporary said of Huxley's retort to Wilberforce about his similar ancestry oddly foreshadowed all our later perceptions: he stood before us and spoke those tremendous words — words which no one seems sure of now, nor, I think, could remember just after they were spoken, for their meaning took away our breath, though it left us in no doubt as to what it was.

Cosslett enables the student of literature or history to observe a cultural myth in the making. Likewise, her introduction is designed to introduce, or restore, nuances to the science — religion debate generally; in particular to stress that the main issue was the survival and adaptation of eighteenth-century natural theology.

For some tastes, probably, Cosslett dissolves away too thoroughly the motive the science-lobby claimed for itself — that of a disinterested passion for truth — and sees Huxley and his colleagues too readily as inverted religionists, but this is a matter of interpretation. To my mind the main omission in Cosslett's reviving of this episode in intellectual history (though it is asking a lot to suggest that it should be made good) is the background of contemporary scientific expertise. When Hugh Miller and Goodwin bandy alleged gaps or continuities in the fossil record how good is their palaeontology by the standards of the day? Annotation on this point could have been sharply illuminating — and, for all the texts, except perhaps those of Darwin, a remarkable novelty.

George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Science is about George Eliot and organicist thought. There was a time when literary critics wrote books on such themes as the maritime references in Shakespeare, with the purpose even in some instances of arguing that Shakespeare had been a sailor. Dr Shuttleworth's book really belongs in this tradition.

The vein in George Eliot's work which is explored is a little more sophisticated, but the same arbitrariness in the emphasis given to it, the same lopsidedness in the picture of results, perhaps more forcing of the evidence and certainly a more improbable view of subject's creative psychology. A tendency to Victorian discourse and thought — often more than a velleity or habit of speech — given the role of universal explainer (Huxley seems to have been written under the pseudonym of Gillin Beer, and it is reminiscent of latter's recent *Darwin's Plots*). When Shuttleworth's ingenuity cannot find the idea of an organism being used in some part of the fiction the novelist is said to be "criticizing" or "exploring" or "exposing" organic thinking.

George Henry Lewes, who wrote a great deal about biology and whose other writing often contains biological imagery, is introduced to make this account of the science-lobby more plausible. But Lewes's influence on, for instance, her description of Lydgate's research — which stresses the scientific hypothesis — is a transposition of Kantian ideas as adapted by William Whewell, the celebrated antagonist of Mill, the philosophy of science at this period, a direct, unmistakable importance in a conception of Lydgate far greater than is determined by his own work.

Lewes, and George Eliot, resorted to all sorts of scientific and neo-philosophical rhetoric. Shuttleworth quotes the following remark about organicism by Lewes: "In vital organism every force is resultant of all the forces; it is a disturbance of equilibrium, and equilibrium is the equivalence of convergent forces." She does comment on the fact that Lewes's formulation rather glaringly depends on ideas taken from physics: it happens not to suit her purposes on another occasion, no doubt, she could have had to a demonstration of the centrality of Newtonian thought in George Eliot.

The sceptical angel

Isobel Armstrong

ANGELA LEIGHTON
Shelley and the Sublime: An interpretation of the major poems
 195pp. Cambridge University Press. £17.50
 (paperback, £6.50).
 0 521 27202 5

Eileay, a near-anagram of Shelley, is the poet of Charles Kingsley's *Two Years Ago* who was "taken ill with a poem". Such confident dismissal of Shelley, inflated by the Victorians and perpetuated by Leavis, has given way only in the last decade or so. Angela Leighton's often brilliant and lucid study reveals an effectual and sceptical angel beating its wings a little too purposefully in the face of the sublime.

Leighton's intricate perception of the sublime as, precisely, "an aesthetic of the void" shapes her account of the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty", "Mont Blanc", *Prometheus Unbound*, *Adonais* and the "declared pessimism" of *The Triumph of Life*. Shelley's sceptical and divided response to the sublime, she argues, is the motive of an exploration of creativity, language and politics in his major poems.

The sublime depends on a principle of defeat, a breakdown and collapse of perception which leads by a series of curious inversions to a crisis of representation. A gradually internalized metaphor of sight had developed in the eighteenth-century aesthetic which underlies Shelley's poetry. But since the eye sees vastness, an uncircumscribed and vacant landscape of infinitude, what we "see" is obscurity. Once the eye fails, language becomes correspondingly more free to represent mental imagery, but it can only register the inexpressible by being incommensurate with its object, and thus proceeds by a series of negations.

Leighton rightly understands the Shelleyan image of creativity in the "Defence" as a process of loss, "footsteps . . . like those of a wind over a sea, which the coming calm erases; and whose traces remain only, as on the wrinkled sand which paves it." He becomes the empiricist of the sublime by working backwards from

Corruption in Vetusta

Raymond Carr

LEOPOLDO ALAS
La Regenta
 Translated by John Rutherford
 736pp. Allen Lane. £14.95 (paperback £8.95).
 0 7139 16370

Gerald Brennan, whose *Spanish Labyrinth*, first published in 1943, remains the most distinguished work on Spanish history, when asked to write the volume on Spain in the *Oxford History of Modern Europe* replied "I've given up history. You can't get at the truth by writing history. That only a novelist can discover". *La Regenta* proves his point. Leopoldo Alas provides insights into the individual and collective psychology of a given society that few historians, their imagination hobbled by their sources, can match.

The theme of *La Regenta* is the decadence of Spain — already before the Generation of 1936 a well-worn topic — and especially the corrupting effects of Catholicism in the perverted form it assumed in a late nineteenth-century provincial city when it was used as a form of social control. The provincial city — Vetusta in the novel — is unmistakably Oviedo, capital of Asturias, where Alas was a respected law professor and an enthusiast for adult education.

It is this process of corruption working on the neurotic Ana, *La Regenta* of the title, which holds the book together. Dismissed by contemporary critics as a Spanish pastiche of Madame Bovary, a charge against which Alas defended himself in his *Folleto literario* (1888), Ana is a finely drawn, clinically accurate portrait of sexual sublimation and hysteria.

Vagabond's vision

C. A. Longhurst

FRANCISCO RICO
The Spanish Picaresque Novel and the Point of View
 Translated by Charles Davis with Harry Sieber
 148pp. Cambridge University Press. £17.50
 (paperback, £5.95).
 0 521 25370 5

The first Spanish edition of Francisco Rico's study of the Spanish picaresque novel appeared in 1970 and the text underwent very slight revisions for the second (1972) and third (1982) editions. The English translation has the bonus of a postscript and extended footnotes in which Rico assesses other critics' recent work. The impact which his book has had over the past dozen years among Hispanists has been out of all proportion to its modest volume. Had an English version been available sooner it might have helped to dispel the persistent incomprehension of the Spanish picaresque that seems to beset critics who tackle the genre from the wider, European, perspective.

Put somewhat crudely, Rico's contention is that the authors of the first two picaresque novels, *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache*, subjected the form and substance of their novels to a consistent and coherent point of view in accord with the character and situation of the fictitious narrator whose autobiography was being recounted. The consistency of point of view provides an internal extension of why the narrators narrate, of what they narrate and of the way they narrate. In thus conceding their lowly protagonists their own point of view, in subjecting everything to the personalized vision of the fictional narrator, these authors were implicitly rejecting the medieval categories still operating in the Renaissance which demanded that the importance of literary characters be predetermined by the position they occupied in the social scale. In proceeding in this manner they were clearly pointing the way forward, as we can retrospectively appreciate, to the modern novel, which was finally to crystallize in the nineteenth century. Subsequent authors of picaresque novels, however, including Quevedo, author of the brilliantly witty *Vida del Buscón*, failed to understand the real artistic discovery of the two earlier novelists and the life

As the translator, John Rutherford, tells us, only chronology has saved us from a flood of D Phil theses on Freud's influence on Alas. Married to a desiccated and sexless retired judge, Ana's finer spirit is crushed by the vulgarity of Vetusta; "its mindless routine was a sea of ice which held her fast . . . She would not fight back . . . reserving the right to live on dreams". It is her dreams that destroy her. Her "arid soul" takes refuge in a morbid mysticism administered by her confessor. After elevating talk of brotherhood and sisterhood in Christ, his lust for Ana escapes the "prison of his soutane". Repelled, Ana falls into an adulterous affair with the local Don Juan, a flashy disciple of German materialists, who thinks of himself as "an electrical machine of love". Having discovered his wife's infidelity, the judge, an actor manqué, plays out in life the Calderonian dramas of honour that he acts in the privacy of his study by challenging his rival to a duel. Shot in the bladder, he dies.

If the limited oeuvre of Alas (he is essentially a man of two novels and a mountain of literary criticism) denies him the rank in Iberian fiction of Galdós (who wrote a preface for the 1901 edition of this novel) or of Eça de Queiroz, *La Regenta* is the greatest single novel in modern Spanish literature. Its only rival is Galdós's *Fortunata y Jacinta*. The literary establishment in Spain — and this includes the Vice-President of the government, who has just given a lecture on Alas — is currently engaged in celebrating the hundredth anniversary of the publication of *La Regenta*. Yet, after the edition of 1901, which sold well, it remained long out of print in Spain and little read until the popular edition of 1966. Then its stature as a masterpiece of

psychological perception was recognized in an article in the *Times Literary Supplement* (January 12, 1967), whose anonymous author lamented the absence of an English translation. Dr Rutherford has supplied not only a splendid translation; his introduction and learned notes guide the reader through the intricacies of Spanish politics and the niceties of Catholic dogma.

How are we to account for the long silence after 1900 and the renaissance of the 1960s? Unamuno stood alone in his admiration for the novel. Rutherford argues that Alas was so and hated as a literary critic that his own novels "stood little chance of receiving objective appraisal". To write one's own book is, no doubt, a perilous enterprise for a critic who has demolished the books of his contemporaries — and Alas was merciless. But there are deeper reasons rooted in the temper of the times. *La Regenta* shocked conservatives and left progressives dissatisfied. Its anti-clericalism, in spite of the manipulation of classic themes like the abuse of the confessional, did not descend into a crude assault on Catholicism which would have fed the appetites of Spanish radicals. Still less was its exploration of the borderlands between sex and certain forms of religious experience, its message that sex and its sublimation are the main drive in human affairs, acceptable in the conformist atmosphere of the restored monarchy, where a Catholic revival and an enforced religious conformism were seen, by a scared bourgeoisie, as the salvation of a society still shaken by the "anarchy" of the godless Republic of 1873.

La Regenta is the longest piece of sustained pessimism (715 pages in Rutherford's translation) in modern European literature and it was published at a time when the public preferred the comforting optimism of Pereda's *Soledad* (1885) as a portrait of Catholic womanhood. It was not only that the content shocked contemporary audiences; they found the style puzzling. As Rutherford points out, Alas is a master of the ambiguities of what is now called the *style indirect libre*, evident in long internal monologues with their shifting perspectives. These passages contain an unparalleled exploration of the nature of religious experience, particularly of the perils of mysticism for unbalanced and disturbed personalities.

Accompaniments

A dead worm makes a number
 As though from the Revelation of St John.
 Shapely leaves burn under shapeless smoke.

Already worried, the rising moon is lined
 By twigs; rejuvenated later on,
 Imparts a whitewash to a whitewashed wall.

Its lofty refulgence interrupting slumber.
 No lesser wonder the octogenarian
 Dohnányi went on recording, wrong notes and all;

That bird-bath and gutters shallowed still with ice,
 A tiny and insecurely-seated bulb
 Has suddenly decided to explore

Both earth and air. And yet these are the mere
 Accompaniments to existence, as it were;
 What could be set down infinitely more

Bizarre, beyond me, secret. Consolation
 In what *Maestro* Mehta said the other day:
 'Always conduct the counterpoint.'

Rising to turn the disc, I hear
 A somewhat unloiled ball-and-socket joint
 Complain it is advanced in entropy.

Great stars not always Wormwood, though the Saint
 Was apropos about 'the little book';
 For poets' words are sweet as honey in
 Their mouths, in due time bitter in the gut.

ROY FULLER

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The high-king's viaticum

J. Graham-Campbell

RUPERT BRUCE-MITFORD and others
The Sutton Hoo Ship Burial: Volume Three
Edited by Angela Care Evans
Two parts, 1,062pp. British Museum Publications. £100 the set.
07141 13484

Englishmen may be grateful for the paganism of their Anglo-Saxon ancestors, who buried their dead with grave-goods which today serve to illuminate events of the fifth to seventh centuries AD. "The richest and most brilliant treasure ever found on British soil", in the words of Sir David Wilson, formed the contents of one such grave, a ship-burial in the barrow-cemetery at Sutton Hoo, near Woodbridge in Suffolk. It was donated by the landowner, Mrs Edith Pretty, to the British Museum, which has now brought to conclusion its definitive publication, with the appearance of the last of three volumes. The excavation of the ship-burial took place in 1939 under the direction of C.W. Phillips, but it is Rupert Bruce-Mitford who was responsible for the post-war project which led up to this magnificent report, much of which is from his own pen.

Volume One, which appeared in 1975, covered the history and environmental character of the site and the 1938 excavations of three mounds which preceded the excavation of the ship-burial (re-investigated in 1965-70). The finds were listed and the ship and the coins published in detail. The numismatic studies led J.P.C. Kent to conclude that the collection of the coins in the purse had ceased c 620-5, although David Brown has recently suggested that the years c 622-9 form "the complete answer". The coins do not, of course date the burial deposit, merely provide its *terminus post quem*. The other fundamental topics discussed in depth included the difficult (and seemingly insoluble) "cenotaph problem", for the grave-chamber contained no recognizable trace of a body. Whether or not there was an inhumation (or even a cremation) does not stand in the way of its interpretation, on the basis of the grave-goods (including arms and armour), as a royal monument to a male member of the East Anglian dynasty. "Who was he?" Dr Bruce-Mitford speculated, and concluded that it was Raedwald, who died c 624. Raedwald was the only East Anglian king to become *brennvalda*, or high-king over the other English kingdoms. Hence, it is suggested, the lavishness of the grave-goods with their wealth of gold jewellery and silver plate, and the significance of the parade armour and regalia (described and discussed in Volume Two).

In this volume Bruce-Mitford is joined by twelve contributors, including Angela Care Evans, who also served as editor. It follows the same format as its predecessors, with over a thousand large, glossy pages in an expensive lay-out requiring, for instance, six pages for the description of seven simple iron cleats; it is abundantly illustrated, with 679 text-figures and a further thirty-eight in colour (although half of the latter could have been dispensed with without serious loss of information). With so many figures to refer to, it is regrettable that the decision was not taken to divide the two parts of the set which form this volume into one of text and one of illustration to facilitate the reader's handling of so bulky a work.

For the purposes of review it is convenient to divide up the material described somewhat differently from the way in which it was allocated to the various authors, more in the manner perhaps in which it was regarded by the burial party. The grave-goods in question fall broadly into two categories: those connected with the apparel, appearance and comfort of the deceased; and those connected with his entertainment and that of his retinue.

The personal apparel includes two caps (one trimmed with otterskin), pile cloaks, textiles suggestive of a tunic and trousers, braids possibly for cross-gartering, and two pairs of shoes; hair-care was provided for by three bone combs. The king's comfort was catered for by the burial of his bedroom accessories (without the actual bed, unless it was this which formed the bier): a goose-down pillow and other bedding, including an ornamented cover; mats and a decorative wall-hanging; and an iron lamp

contained food-offerings, and little enough for actual drink despite the range of containers and utensils discussed below. These dishes consist of three Celtic hanging-bowls, a Coptic bowl, a fluted silver bowl, a small silver ladle and bowl, a maplewood bowl and horn cup, and a set of ten silver bowls (for drinking). Two silver spoons and four horn-handled knives were provided for the consumption of food.

The burial party was naturally concerned for the king's thirst and the necessity for him to be able to quench that of his retinue. Unfortunately, the implications of the various Sutton Hoo vessels are not fully explored in this volume; notably lacking is any reference to the work of Christine Fell on Anglo-Saxon drinks. The Anglo-Saxons were familiar with four different alcoholic beverages: a malt-based beer (*ealu*); fermented honey and water, or mead (*medu*); fermented grape-juice, or wine



Reconstruction drawing showing a possible arrangement for the pair of drinking-horns and the six maplewood bottles at the time of the burial, from the book reviewed here.

filled with beeswax. The description and analysis of the textiles is the work of Elizabeth Crowfoot; it is based on that of her late mother, Grace M. Crowfoot, and includes comparable Anglo-Saxon finds, but the reader missing any general discussion of their significance in the burial needs to be referred back to Chapter Seven in Volume One.

The obligations on royalty to provide hospitality could have been met by means of the three bronze cauldrons; not forgetting the intricate iron cauldron-chain, the length of which implies the use of a feasting-hall with rafters at least 4.30 m above the floor. The royal tableware included a vast Byzantine silver platter (the "Anastasiu's dish") on which there had been placed for the burial "a considerable bulk of cremated or burnt bone", perhaps overcooked meats from the funeral feast or grilled joints provided for the dead man, although it cannot be ruled out altogether that these are the ashes of its owner. In this connection it should at least be noted that there is no evidence for any of the other tableware having

(win); and fermented fruit-juice sweetened with honey (*beor*). The latter would have been the strongest drink available to them in the absence of any knowledge of distillation in Western Europe at this period. Whatever was drunk therefore from the eight small cups of walnut burrwood (capacity not estimated, but only four to five centimetres high), it could not have been spirits, as is one suggestion here, and we should follow Professor Fell in seeing them as *beor* cups. If wine was drunk at the East Anglian court in the early seventh century, then it will have been from the set of silver bowls, in the absence of any glass vessels, or from the six bottle-shaped vessels of maplewood. The pair of magnificent drinking-horns, each with a capacity of about two litres, would have been used for beer or mead.

From what would these drinks have been served? The largest container is a yew-wood tub, iron-mounted with silver escutcheons covering its rivet-heads, with a capacity of about 100 litres. It is identified by Katherine East as a water-container on the grounds that mead or beer would have been stored in a closed vessel, but it may in fact have been provided with a lid and there is none other such in the burial. In any case beer/mead will have been made for the occasion and would not need to have been stored for long periods. The use of open vessels for this purpose might of course have led to the contamination of the contents, a problem attested for the late Anglo-Saxon period; for as Christopher Hohler has observed in another context "among the few apparently indisputable contributions of England to the Latin liturgy is the formula, to be read over the cask by the priest, to improve the quality of beer in which mice or weasels have got drowned".

It seems likely that one of the three Sutton Hoo buckets was deposited in the tub, which means that it is improbable that it contained liquid on burial. The other two buckets were, however, placed away from tub-cauldron complex. The three buckets were, however, placed away from tub-cauldron complex. The three buckets were, however, placed away from tub-cauldron complex.

to the side of the main group of drinking-horns and so may well have contained a supply of beer or mead, the other at the west end of the chamber among the exceptional grave-goods, presumably because of the importance of its contents (of which no traces were found). Being adjacent to the set of silver bowls might be that both bucket and bowls were needed with wine-drinking. If beer was served, might it not (for the occasion alone) have been contained in the unique pottery bottle placed next to the Anastasiu's dish, underneath which were the burrwood cups.

For entertainment during and after the burial there was a lyre (in its beaver-skin bag), and a set of ten silver bowls (for drinking). The set of ivory gaming-pieces (ill-preserved and acidic sand).

The presentation of this range of artefacts provides a gold-mine for students of Anglo-Saxon England, as each object is discussed in turn by the various authors from the different aspects of its form, manufacture, use, origins, distribution and date. One can begin to do justice to the quantity and quality of the original research contained in this volume which, as specific Sutton Hoo problems are answered, opens up many new enquiries. One or two general comments, however, are in order, to draw attention to wider implications of some of the material.

The sixteen separate pieces of large Mediterranean silver have ramifications beyond Anglo-Saxon England. Bruce-Mitford argues that their quality has been underestimated, even if they are not of the same quality as the finest Byzantine church plate and large vessels; their manufacture is discussed by Susan Youngs. The three Celtic hanging-bowls include the finest of the fifth to seventh century bowls known and Bruce-Mitford concludes most reasonably that they are not, as has been suggested, of Irish origin, but were made in different workshops in North Wales. (There is an extraordinary digression into whether such bowls might have been made in the manner of Chinese water-comps leading to the conclusion that they were which has no place in such a definitive publication as this.) The chapter on the metalwork, including a full account of the Taplow barrow, will provide much of interest to musicologists.

As in previous Sutton Hoo volumes the British Museum's Research Laboratory has made major contributions to individual chapters, in particular its scientific examination of the hanging-bowls, enabling Anglo-Saxon pairs to be distinguished from original Celtic work. But in this instance Mavis Blimson and Andrew Oddy have contributed a chapter of their own which was originally planned for the fourth volume (of general essays) and now appears. Oddy reports on his analysis of bronze-illies in Dark-Age Europe, and promise well, but their interpretation is limited by the need for many more such analyses. Blimson has analysed all the coloured glass and millefiori used in the Sutton Hoo hanging-bowls and gold jewellery, with exceptional interesting results for students of Celtic ornamental metalwork. In the Sutton Hoo context, however, her demonstration that millefiori in the Anglo-Saxon Jewellery is of a different type to that of the Celtic bowls, consisting of settings seemingly not from a single supply of re-used Roman slabs, will encourage the modification of claims made in Volume Two for the nature of the supposed Celtic element in the work of the Sutton Hoo metalworkers.

Such reappraisals of the evidence allow the publication of Volume Three to mark the end of Sutton Hoo studies, but also a new beginning. Indeed, new work on the cemetery itself, with further excavations, is already in progress. All honour and glory therefore to the British Museum, and particularly to Dr Bruce-Mitford, for what has been achieved, but as we look forward to the next revelations it is surely not out of place to express the hope that a less expensive and more widely adopted for the presentation of the results, for there could be no justification following the extravagant format of the first two volumes, and unwieldy format devoted to the ship-burial.

Stability and since

Barry Supple

CHARLES P. KINDLEBERGER
A Financial History of Western Europe
525pp. Allen and Unwin. £25.
0043320880

It is tempting to blame the excesses of vulgar Keynesianism for the alarming if brief renaissance of strict monetarism; for extremism breeds extremism. And the preoccupation with the management of demand (on the assumption that institutions, structures and prices hardly mattered as long as resources were unemployed) was doomed once prices began to go berserk in the 1970s. As a result, the relatively new certitudes were jettisoned, in the main in favour of the old, and economics discovered yet more knots in which to tie itself.

Historians, of course, have rarely exemplified the sort of tunnel vision which has embarrassed economists. Their sins have more frequently been those of commission – the jumbled inclusion of all sorts of data and considerations in their analyses of economic performance. But history's laundry-lists do at least have the advantage of reminding us of the devilish complexity of the occurrence as well as the explanation of economic instability, inflation and deflation, the evolution of monetary arrangements and financial institutions, and the flow of nominal and real resources.

It is complications such as these which attract the attention of Charles Kindleberger – one of those rare beings who can move with equal ease in high theory or low history. Unfortunately, *A Financial History of Western Europe* is based on a university lecture series, and although the learning, range and stimulus shine through, so do the fragmented structure, the loose ends and the convoluted sentences. More surprisingly, the disjointedness of the study, and its over-enthusiastic use of narrative data, are not sufficiently alleviated by extended discussions of general analytical issues. Nevertheless, Kindleberger is altogether too perceptive and informed a scholar to conceal his insights with complete success. This, and the fact that the book's combination of scope and content is unique, give it an importance beyond its apparent status as a textbook.

"Financial history" is interpreted with pleasing eclecticism to cover not merely money, public finance and financial institutions, but capital accumulation and investment, international economic relationships, war and post-war adjustments, and economic performance and fluctuations. The book begins with the medieval development of money and banking;

devotes half its pages to the period down to First World War, which marked an irrevocable alteration in the contours and working of the world's finances and economics; and then sweeps through the history of the interwar *débâcle*, the dislocation of the Second World War, and the counter-point of experiment, adjustment and disruption which has accompanied the evolution of international financial arrangements over the past forty years.

The recurrent themes are few but vital: the pervasive and unresolved controversy between those who advocate the discretionary management of financial affairs and those who adhere to the presumed virtues of strict monetary discipline (a venerable controversy which surfaced in the debate between the banking and the currency schools of thought during the Napoleonic Wars, and which derives from differing explanations of the value of currencies and the causes of economic fluctuations); the problems and implications of the massive international transfers which accompany overseas capital investment, the payment of wartime subsidies and postwar reparations, and the repayment of wartime debts; the "displacement" (of institutions, economic structures and relative values of currencies) which results from wars and postwar adjustments; the role of finance and credit (rather than merely money or income or expenditure) in generating economic instability; and – perhaps above all – the importance in international affairs of key currencies, that is, of lenders of the last resort and economies sufficiently strong to give a lead – and lend stability to – international currency and financial flows.

Inevitably, of course, eclecticism is associated with scepticism, and Kindleberger declines to ally himself with any particular school of thought on financial affairs and monetary history. If, however, he is to be identified with a large and central hypothesis it is, precisely, that of the importance of the key currency – besides which abstract models of the impersonal working of "automatic" systems (eg, the nineteenth-century gold standard) or grandiose attempts to secure world-wide substitutes count for very little indeed. The concluding words strike the characteristic Kindleberger note of acronymic expertise, reassuring assertion, and cautious reservation:

I conclude that the EMU has failed... and that the EMS promises little advance over the EMU to solve the European monetary problem, or to provide a European monetary substitute for the falling dollar, needed to undergird world economic stability. The European and the world systems will limp along for some time.

Ultimately, new hierarchical arrangements will emerge. Whether Europe, the United States, or some yet unsuspected nation will provide the world

public good of monetary and economic stability is not yet evident. Meanwhile, it is important that all countries take care not to rock the boat.

The twentieth century has had more than its fair share of boat-rocking. Indeed, the achievement or disruption of "monetary and economic stability" naturally compromise the fundamental themes of any financial history, and this is no exception. Much of the pre-nineteenth century material is given over to an examination of the evolution of the institutions and techniques on which the grand and generally harmonious Victorian system was based: a spreading banking network, solidly based currencies, sophisticated capital markets, the relatively unimpeded allocation of investment funds, and (above all) the international system of credit, capital and exchanges, ostensibly knitted by the "automatic" gold standard but effectively maintained by a leading number of financial centres with London in the van.

Much of twentieth-century financial and international economic history can be related in terms of attempts to recapture the essence of these halcyon arrangements – initially by the pursuit of simplistic (even reactionary) reconstruction, and after the misery of the 1930s and 1940s by the devising of more self-conscious institutions and agreements. The basic problems have stemmed, of course, from the breakdown of international market systems, violent international fluctuations, and the conflicting pursuit of national ends. At the same time, however, they cannot be dissociated from the "displacement" effect of war and the end of war, which had its most dramatic and alarming manifestation between 1914 and the early 1920s. Then, the creation and redirection of enormous amounts of indebtedness (in the form of war loans, reparations and international investment), the associated crippling problem of transfers, the maladjustments between conventional exchange rates and divergent prices, the unevenness of national potentialities for manufacturing and trade – all combined to destabilize the economies of individual countries and that of the world itself. And the resolution of this critical condition proved no more than a spatchcock affair, soon to be destabilized itself.

Kindleberger provides temperate and fair guidance through this maze. Admittedly, his analyses are not always pellucid. But that may be merely another way of saying that he eschews dogmatism. Moreover, part of the complexity of presentation springs from his grasp of the fact that financial as well as economic affairs are rarely determined by "purely" financial or economic considerations. Thus the violently disruptive inflationary and deflationary pressures which have scarred so much of

the twentieth century are seen in terms of the struggle between conflicting interest groups (debtors and creditors, propertied and working classes). More specifically, the German hyper-inflation of 1921-3 "was much more than a financial phenomenon and had deep roots in the socio-political condition of the German peoples", just as the brutally efficient and necessary reform of the German currency in 1948 was probably made possible only by the prior destruction of nearly all major interest groups in defeated German society. At another level, as other historians have pointed out too, any careful consideration of the economic determinants and implications of Britain's unsatisfactory return to gold at par in 1925 must also take account of its semi-religious overtones, of the moral commitment to the gold standard in its pre-1913 embodiment.

In terms of national economic policy-making, such emotional fervour in monetary and financial matters is still with us – at least at the level of propaganda. Pursued with moderation, financial rectitude is, of course, an essential element in social health. But too narrow a view of, say, the "sacredness of contract" – by which our grandfathers meant the resistance to innovations in taxation and the ruthless pursuit of price stability and conventional exchange rates – is too likely to overlook the social rights and expectations of large sections of the community. As Keynes argued, the state has a right and duty to revise what is intolerable and to control vested interests when they threaten the general welfare. But if, as seems the case, both equity and stability demand the intervention of civil and financial authorities within a nation state, similar institutions (or, at least, institutions with similar functions) are needed in the international economy. They existed – imperfectly, but not disastrously – in the young international economy of the nineteenth century. And in the absence of effective supra-national authorities, we must, with Kindleberger, await the renewed influence of key currencies and top nations.

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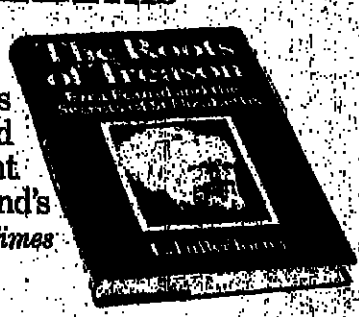
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Less than serious

Simon Rae

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0436 509962
MICHAEL SCHMIDT
Choosing a Guest: New and selected poems
95pp. Anvil Press. £3.95.
085646 1059

George Szirtes is probably tired of reading reviews of his work which start by reminding him he is a painter by training, but, whether he is framing his family in "The Claude Glass", exploring the ironies of still life in "A Pheasant" or contemplating "A Girl Sewing", his poems do tend to assemble like pictures. Or perhaps a truer analogue, given the narrative element in many of his poems, would be the photographic collages David Hockney exhibited recently at the Hayward Gallery, with their brilliant incorporation of activity and the passage of time in a static image. As with Hockney's "joiners", Szirtes's poems are only too happy to fragment and distort, disrupting preconceived ideas of what a representation of reality should be. But, unlike Hockney, whose photographic experiments are designed to show the world more "like it is" than orthodox representations could, Szirtes upsets the conventions of the realist mode in pursuit of an alternative version of reality. As the title of his first book, *The Slant Door*, suggested, his imagination meets the world at an angle, and his poetry is open to the hallucinatory and the completely bizarre ("Slow Tango for Six Horses"). Twists of fantasy, convoluted shards of narrative and snippets of historical detail are shaken together and served with surrealist relish: "The Russians on Burns night / Celebrate their history of combustions. / Their people lie in complete unity / In graves as large as Europe and as lonely."

Ideas of purity

Stephen Romer

GUILLEVIC
Requils: Poème 1977-1982
186pp. Paris: Gallimard. 80fr.
2 07 026738 5
PHILIPPE JACOTTET
Pensées sous les nuages: Poèmes
73pp. Paris: Gallimard. 53fr.
2 07 07009 7

In one of his few writings on the subject, Roland Barthes characterized a modernist poetry where beneath each word "beats a kind of existential geology" through which its autonomy is preserved, uncompromised by current convention or the chain of signification that diluted classical poetry. As a result, Barthes continues, modern poetic discourse is "full of terror which links man not with other men, but with the most inhuman images of nature". It is certainly an apt description of Guillevic's new poem *Requils*. Identical in style to his preceding ones, this consists of nearly 200 pages of brief notations and gnomic *aperçus*. As if aspiring to the condition of a *menhir* in his native Breton soil, Guillevic's main concern is with rootedness of various kinds. He contemplates the benefits of having a body:

Plusieurs fois
Ton corps

A senti s'approcher
La gueule de l'abîme,
T'a prévenu.

He favours an earth-worm's view of the cosmos (and the fluid exchange it affords him from the lowest to the highest). The humility of his chosen position, however forced at times, is not without its disarming effects:

C'est avec toi
Que j'ai affaire
Caillou

Que tout à l'heure
Je ne reconnaîtrai même pas.

"The Kissing Place" is a sequence of poems investigating the architecture of domesticity, a meditation on familial intimacies, but also on the ever present possibility of nightmare.

However, to adopt the controlling image of the title poem, it is not always easy to know whether one is on the right wavelength ("You tune in but the voice is out of reach / and seems merely to flirt with meaning"). Of course the reader realizes he is being teased with his own stolid hungerings after paraphrasable meaning and quantifiable significance ("Preferring always what's predictable"). And should he raise the question of "seriousness", he can be referred to "John Aubrey's Antique Shop", where the presiding antiquary muses: "As I've forgotten who once said of Andrewes, / his sermons were too playful. I believe it. / Here's a pretty thing, and there's a pretty thing / argues a serious lack of seriousness." The question recurs in "Postscript: A Reply to the Angel at Blythburgh", in which Szirtes engages Peter Porter in debate. This is not an altogether successful poem, and Szirtes's willful skittishness ("Christ sways on his slender Cross, / St Sebastian, scandalous / In loincloth, sways like Diana Ross, / Supreme, appalled") offers no real challenge to Porter's more weighty approach.

The problem of tone arises with regard to another poem, "Long Nose Tragedy, Short Nose Comedy", written to show that "It is quite possible to preach a sermon / on the limitations of a nose". But the "playfulness" Szirtes brings to the pulpit seems to have no self-regulatory mechanism to screen out a stanza like this:

Was it a nose that led Jews to their death?
They couldn't cut it off to spite their face
but others are always willing to do it for you.
If it offend them pluck it out. But what of the space
remaining? It can take away your breath.
You'll never stick it back with Super Glue.

Lapses of taste like that certainly can take away

your breath. An interesting comparison would be with "The Nose", by Andrey Voznesensky—whose "I am Goya" supplies the epigraph to another poem in which the unspeakable is treated a little too glibly. Using the nose as a symbol for dangerous, but inescapable (everybody has one) individuality, the Russian poet allows his satiric fantasy full rein—the nose grows uncontrollably through the night, "Impaling each floor like / Receipts on a spike"—while clinching his point with an adroit irony: "Why, O Prime Mover of Noses, why / Do our noses grow longer, our lives shorter. . . ? / They report that eskimos / Kiss with the nose. / Among us this has not caught on."

Michael Schmidt's imagination thrives best underwater. The title of his third book, *My Brother Gloucester* (1976), indicates a "debt for marine imagery to Clarence's dream in *Richard III*", and its pages entice the reader into a submarine world like Jacques Cousteau's. In "The Diving Bell" (not included here) the poet asks,

What is it about depth
that attracts us and we go
further than day can into the sea,
beyond the dwindling colour of known fish
into a region of eyes. . . ?

—a region also of such enormous pressure that even the fish acclimated to it are under constant threat: "if they touch sharp stone, / or sometimes when they mate, / they burst, / a scattering cloud / in their lost atmosphere". In this poem, man is simply a wondering observer, but in other forays beneath the surface he is a predator: "We are hungry in the upper air" ("Underwater"). But the process is easily reversed, and "Fish are quicker than lime on a body". In "The Fool" we see a nautical disaster contributing a whole infrastructure to the seabed's economy as the fish gaze "at the galleons that sink / and break before them . . . spilling / treasure meaningless and brilliant, habitable; / and the drowned mariners more slowly drifting

/ touch down as gently as dead leaves".

Many of Schmidt's poems explore the natural world and man's relationship to it. Although in "Excuses", the poet is unable to dispatch the fish he has unwittingly caught ("Scorpion" he watches with disinterested cination as the frantic creature is carried in to the anhill. "Like a cat / it drops right side up, into a tide / of sharp red piners". Another close observation is laced with painful pain as if an unseen swarm mined there.

Schmidt is not, though, primarily a naturalist. "Wasp's Nest", for instance, with its glances at the myth of the Fall and acknowledgment of the inevitable recurrence of willed failing, has the added dimension of parable; while "The Diving Bell" was first collected in a section titled "Fables". Schmidt's poetry has a far wider thematic range than there is room to illustrate here. An agonist concern with religion runs through all four of his previous books, along with a specific preoccupation with Catholicism and its impact on Mexico, both at the time of the Spanish conquest and in the present day. Mexico's pre-European history inspired several poems in his first two books, *Bedlam & the Outlines* (1970), and *Desert of the Lions* (1972)—something of the merciless majesty of the Aztec civilization is evoked in a line like "where the beaks fed strong men to the sun", from "Mala che Eagles". With *A Change of Affairs* (1978) the focal point was love and the pain of loss. Poems like "Piano", "Here and There" and "The Honeyeater" ("Only, the honeyeater comes, / An air that you prepared, to fill your place") are fine encapsulations of human happiness. The new poems grouped at the beginning of *Choosing a Guest* suggest a resolution of that personal crisis, and a turning back to the wider world from a position of stability.

partir du rien, telle est ma loi" is not merely the keynote of his first poems, but of every poem he has written; for each one represents the fullest sense, a new beginning. If there is a truth for Jaccottet, it resides far from dogmatic certitude of any kind in a certain relation with the world. What is compelling in all his work, prose or poetry, is the feel of something at once intensely subjective and objectively exacting being closely argued out. In the prose piece, "La Promenade sous les Arbres", he rejects the bloodless superlatives of the Irish writer A. E., in favour of the visible, and with striking simplicity sets about describing a morality constructed out of nothing but the natural light of the world. And "Le mot jote", from the new book, we find the same avowal:

Lumière qui te vois pour soulever l'ombre.
Et secouer froid de tes épaules
Je n'ai jamais cherché qu'à te comprendre et t'aimer.

Jaccottet lives surrounded by mountains, and remaining responsive to their changing aspect, measuring his impurity in terms of their purity. Where he differs is not only in the pervasiveness of his voice, with its hesitations, sudden *elans*, retractions, intimately related to natural speech rhythms, but also in what he admits of human presence:

L'aurais-je donc inventé, le pinceau du coucou
sur la toile rugueuse de la terre,
l'huile dorée du soir sur les prairies où sur les bords
C'était pourtant comme la lampe sur la table avec le pain.

In fact, Jaccottet is as far from the Symbolist technique of inventing the ideal landscape as it is possible to be. Gratuitous beauty, with its attendant whiff of artificiality, would be anathema to him. Whether he is writing about mountains, sunlight or the music of Henry Purcell, it is the actually seen and felt that is never far throughout the book. Perhaps more than any poet writing in France today, by holding truth to that vulnerable first-person singular, to his voice, he comes closest to the source of authentic lyric poetry. And if it is a minor voice, in the noblest sense of the term, his attentiveness to the here and now—"et par la fenêtre, je vois en ce moment précipiter"—gives us unforgettable moments of exactitude.

Contradictions of a consul

David Fitzpatrick

ROGER SAWYER
Casement: The flawed hero
199pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £12.50.
07102 00137

Roger Casement's bizarre career as adventurer, philanthropist, British consul, Irish "patriot" and wartime "traitor" has never ceased to fascinate students of the Anglo-Irish psyche. The contradictions evident in his personality and conduct invite, yet continue to elude, resolution through biography. Casement's investigations of the maltreatment and exploitation of native rubber workers in the Congo and the Putumayo were well publicized and widely accepted. Beneficiaries of the iniquitous systems which he exposed, such as the King of the Belgians and the Peruvian government, were acutely embarrassed, though not to the point of abandoning exploitation. Casement became identified internationally as that rare being, a public official who was both disinterested and effective in the pursuit of liberty.

Yet he had scarcely been knighted before this romantic persona began to fall apart. His Majesty's consul-general retired from the service, addressed seditious meetings in Ireland, ran guns for the Irish Volunteers, formed an Irish Brigade from prisoners-of-war in Germany, then made his way back to Ireland in April 1916 by German U-boat. The practical man of action proved hopelessly naive and incompetent in his dealings with German officials and Irish nationalists, and but for his execution for high treason would have been remembered in Ireland as a fool rather than a martyr. The disinterested protector of oppressed peoples was later revealed to have taken unconventional delight in the physical attributes of the native bodies on whose mutilation he had so movingly reported. At different

periods Casement was regarded as a romantic hero by different nations, but his career taken as a whole seems fragmented almost to the point of insanity.

Casement's public life was matched by an equally secret life of homosexual promiscuity, both in fantasy and reality. His partners in sodomy were often foreign and almost always lower-class, and his inclinations were evidently unsuspected by his circle of devoted upper-class friends of both sexes. Casement's secret life might never have come to light but for two circumstances. First, he was a compulsive writer and preserver of diaries, and applied the same punctilious attention to specifying sexual experiences (according to number of entries, position, size of genital organs and extent of satisfaction) as he did to recording official engagements. Second, British officials chose to leak exhibits from these "Black Diaries" in order to defame Casement during his detention and trial in 1916. This squalid stratagem proved posthumously counter-productive, persuading many sensible observers that the purple passages had been forged as well as leaked. When William J. Maloney published the first detailed "proof" of forgery in 1936, many echoed Yeats's indignant comment that "Casement was not a very able man but he was gallant and unselfish, and had surely his right to leave what he would have considered an unsullied name". The forgery thesis was reinforced by persistent official refusal to allow inspection of the diaries. Since 1959, however, many scholars (and doubtless others) have examined them. Most agree that the diaries were indeed the work of Roger Casement rather than Armando Normand or some latter-day Pigott.

Casement has already inspired at least six biographies and four diary analyses. With the partial exception of René MacColl's rather disparaging study (1956), earlier works were ren-

dered sketchy and provisional by the inaccessibility of relevant public records concerning Casement's consular as well as copulatory life. Then, in 1973 and 1976, Brian Inglis and B. L. Reid produced two major biographies which drew heavily upon these sources. Inglis's study was sober, compassionate and well balanced; Reid's, despite its stylistic flamboyance and apparent relish in Casement's randiness, was still more fully documented. Readers may therefore wonder whether Roger Sawyer was well advised to rework his doctoral thesis into yet another biography.

Sawyer does not pretend to compete with the much longer and more comprehensive studies by Reid and Inglis, his purpose being merely "to enlarge on those areas of Casement's life which have been neglected". He contends that vital insights into Casement's personality, official preoccupations and subsequent commitment to Irish nationalism may be derived from sources unused by previous biographers. These sources are (respectively) genealogical data, correspondence between consulates and legations, and Casement's pre-war letters to John Hartman Morgan. To what extent has Sawyer justified his decision to build a book upon these insights?

He argues plausibly enough that Casement's early orphaning, parentage and ancestry all contributed crucially to his future "ambivalence". Previous studies have dealt very summarily with his background and childhood, though passing reference has been made to his clandestine "conditional baptism" as a Roman Catholic during a holiday visit to Wales with his mother, and to his father's successive employments in putting down the Sikhs on behalf of one empire and struggling against another in support of Kosuth. Sawyer attaches great significance to the religious cleavage between Casement's parents, and to his eventual return to the Roman faith. He does not, however, quote Casement's statement to Bulmer Hobson, another northern Protestant, that Irish freedom could come "only through Irish Protestants", since "the Irish Catholic, man for man, is a poor crawling coward as a rule". The author traces his subject's social snobbery and insecurity as an adult to the uneasy mingling, through his parents' marriage, of incompatible ancestral strains. The Casements of Antrim are pictured as minor "Black Protestant" gentry, whereas the much grander Jephsons of the maternal line could afford to adopt a broader Unionism than the "tribal loyalty" of the paternal family. Though Casement was himself fascinated with his "roots", the argument seems strained. As a child Casement had no contact with the senior Jephson Norreys branch of Mallow Castle, with whom his mother's connection was remote and obscure. Nor, after his father's death, did he have much contact with the Casements except to rescue insolvent brothers. The author is ill-at-ease in the genealogical maze, and students of the paternal pedigree would do better to consult Burke's *Irish Family Records* (1976).

Sawyer's analysis of unfamiliar consular and private correspondence only marginally re-

finer our understanding of Casement's mentality. His obsession as a consul with clerical minutiae, and his quickness to take offence in matters of protocol, have already been vividly depicted by Inglis. Sawyer notes that his prickliness in matters of form reappeared during his visit to Germany as "the diplomatic representative of a hypothetical state", when his satisfaction at meeting Beithmann-Hollweg was spoiled by the chancellor's tardiness in fixing the appointment. The author contributes an interesting, if poorly integrated, account of the rickety functioning of the Edwardian consular service and the low social standing of its members. It seems that Casement not only lent glamour to the hitherto drab image of the British consul, but contributed to the eventual widening of the consul's functions to include the protection of non-mercantile British interests and even of "stateless persons" such as the Putumayo Indians. Some use is made of private correspondence to analyse with greater precision Casement's evolving "separatist" outlook during 1913, but Sawyer does not substantially modify the orthodox view that Casement was already an "advanced" Irish nationalist by 1905. He has used novel sources to add interesting footnotes to the familiar record without rewriting it.

Both Reid and Inglis treated Casement's personality as fragmented, and his secretive homosexuality as a symptom of that fragmentation. Inglis implied that Casement's public judgment degenerated as his sexual enterprise intensified, until he developed the symptoms of a manic-depressive. Reid, more grandiloquently, "began to feel that Casement was one of those men who embody the dilemma of a culture and present a general problem". A few dissentients, such as the playwright David Rudkin, have rejected the psychopathological interpretation and depicted Casement's personality as an "essential continuum": he was "in absolute sensual harmony with his own anus", Sawyer, however, adopts a rather mechanistic version of the fragmentation thesis. Casement's "deviation from the sexual norm" is attributed to his mother's early death: "at the emotional and physical level he became a classic example of frustrated mother-love". His sexuality is analysed as a determinant, even positive, factor in his public conduct. Sawyer concludes that Casement "could embrace loyalties which, to others, were irreconcilable. This capacity eventually led to his personal downfall, but it enabled him, almost intuitively, to ignore contradictions of class and nationality when it suited him, and devote himself to the weak and the vulnerable."

Sawyer's study will not supplant previous biographies. It is written in a drab, contorted style which provides a droll counterpoint to Casement's own ecstatic manner. Yet Sawyer does unfold a figure who was better informed, less naive and more adept at manipulating publicity in order to force social change, than previous studies have indicated. Though the book is even more "flawed" than its subject, it nevertheless modestly enhances Casement's claim to being remembered as a "hero".

Ivy Compton-Burnett

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Matthew Heald Cooper TO RIDE A TIGER

'Spy-fi has acquired an alpha recruit'—GUARDIAN (of his 1983 début *When Fish Begin to Smell*). Now, with a deadly concoction of unholy alliances, as small nations scramble for nuclear weapons, his new novel reinforces that judgement. £8.95

Vickery Turner

FOCUSING

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Gollancz

Behind the lines in Ireland

Robert Hewison

"In Ireland, language is a political fact." Denis Donoghue's comment in an Irish special number of the *TLS* in 1972 is as true as ever. That is the conclusion I draw from the "Top of the Irish" book promotion jointly organized by the Book Marketing Council and the Irish Book Marketing Group.

After the "Best of British", "Young Novelists" and "Novels of Our Time" campaigns conducted by the Book Marketing Council you will be familiar with the media manipulation involved. A list of names and titles is devised, press releases are dispatched, parties given, and the promoters wait for the squabbles to break out over who is on the list and who is not; why him and not her, and what possible qualification did he or she have to be a judge. All this sells a lot of books.

But in an Irish context, the questions are more than mere gossip. Who represents Ireland's language, and controls its dissemination, is an urgent issue, which the "Top of the Irish" helps to dramatize. Although the inclusion of Samuel Beckett on the list is taken in Dublin as a gesture of reconciliation (to which he has made no response), and the exclusion of Edna O'Brien seems to ignore a distinctly Irish voice, the final selection of thirteen writers was less significant than the fact that of the nineteen publishing houses involved, only four were Irish. Of these one, Mercier Press, is not a literary publisher, and another, Brandon Books, was co-publishing with Chatto. Only some twenty per cent of all books bought throughout Ireland are published by Irish publishers.

Those in the know say this figure is surprisingly high: and like so many contemporary Irish issues, it is the product of historical developments. After the Act of Union of 1800, Dublin publishing declined, not least because it was no longer possible to pirate London copyright. The union drew Anglo-Irish writers to London, while outside Celtic Revival circles the atmosphere in Dublin became starchy and conservative. The rise of nationalism led to a revival of Irish publishing in the first decades of the twentieth century, but the establishment of the Irish Free State introduced an era of political and religious conservatism, codified by the introduction of literary censorship in 1929.

In these circumstances writers continue to look abroad, while the many practical arrangements which ignore the existence of a frontier between North and South mean that the whole of Ireland is regarded by British publishers as part of the "home" territory. After the war, until the launching of the Dolmen Press in 1951, there was almost no domestic outlet for Irish writing in the English language. (One of the unnecessary slights to Irish publishers was the failure to invite the founder of the Dolmen Press, Liam Miller, to any of the "Top of the Irish" official functions.)

At the beginning of the 1970s the position began to change. (The Irish Book Publishers' Association, CLE, was only founded in that year.) While the launch of the New Writers Press in 1967 had heralded the arrival of a new literary generation, the resurgence of political tension in Northern Ireland after 1968 gave an impetus to writing, particularly poetry, in both North and South. Finally, the collapse in 1974 of a major commercial Dublin publisher, the Irish University Press, saw a number of smaller enterprises emerge from the ruins. In the last ten years Wolfhound Press, the O'Brien Press, Aitken House - The Women's Press, Ward River and Poolbeg have established themselves as literary imprints, along with a number of poetry publishers. The latest imprint to emerge is Brandon Books, which has developed out of the moribund Irish Writers' Cooperative. Only Wolfhound, with Liam O'Flaherty and Liam Lynch, and Ward River with Mannix Flynn, succeeded in reaching the "Top of the Irish" in their own right, whereas Faber and Faber with Beckett, Seamus Heaney and John McGahern, had three of their authors on the list. While Faber (who to their credit have been more energetic than some British publishers in exploiting the opportunities given) are happily increasing their sales of Irish authors on both sides of the water, Wolfhound and Ward River have found it very difficult to penetrate the

English market at all.

Since Irish literary publishing almost did not exist ten years ago, Wolfhound and Ward River should be congratulated on being able to afford the £700-a-head fee for taking part in the promotion. Steve McDonagh of Brandon Books sees the way from "the periphery of the English-speaking world" through co-publishing with London firms: a number of Irish lists are now being carried by English houses, and the creation of Irish Book Handling Ltd should help with distribution. But continued penetration of the Irish market by British books, the feeling of being a second-class citizen in your own country, continues to draw resentment. This situation may change. For one thing, as Seamus Cushman of Wolfhound told me, if Dublin discovers another Beckett or Joyce, they'll make sure he doesn't publish from London.

The word plays an important part in Irish culture. The Irish buy more books per head of population than any other country in the English-speaking world. Irish Prime Ministers are perhaps more available than British ones, but there were sound political reasons for Dr FitzGerald to launch the Dublin end of the "Top of the Irish" promotion, while Mrs Thatcher, when invited to reciprocate in London, declined.

Dr FitzGerald's predecessor and opponent, Charles Haughey, made a number of gestures to literature, first in 1979 by making it possible for writers living in Ireland to claim complete tax exemption on the grounds of authorship. This has helped to attract a number of tax exiles, though perhaps the most famous of them, J. P. Donleavy, was not among the Top of the Irish, and the Department of Revenue exercises its beneficent, if sometimes capricious patronage for Irish authors too.

Much more important, in 1982, in defiance of Common Market regulations, Ireland abandoned VAT on books. (Britain imposes no VAT because purchase tax did not apply when we joined the EEC.) Those who campaigned against VAT came together to form the Irish Book Marketing Group in 1982, and unlike its British counterpart, it has included booksellers as well as publishers from the beginning. Thus its promotions have received far more support. The chairmanship of Harold Clarke, of Eason, the largest newsagents and booksellers in the Republic and Northern Ireland, has had a lot to do with the Group's success. (Eason is so like W. H. Smith that it is no surprise to discover that it was W. H. Smith, until the founding Smith sold his Irish interests on becoming Secretary for Ireland in 1886.)

Respect for the word is reflected in the (relative to England) far higher percentage of the Irish Arts Council's allocation to literature, and the full range of activities it pursues. But in addition to its support to publishers, its royalty supplements for authors, the literary magazines it backs, the travel awards it gives and its support for writers' workshops and writers in schools, the Republic's Arts Council has also set up the Aosdána, (Council of Bards), in which writers figure prominently.

The Aosdána has affinities with the Irish Academy of Letters, founded by W. B. Yeats in 1932, which now appears to be almost defunct. It is to consist of 150 great Irish men of letters, music and the visual arts, of whom 103 have so far been found. The initial selection was made by an anonymous committee, but since January 1983 the body has been self-governing, and they now elect their own members. (Eight of the Top of the Irish are members.) The election process is so complicated that a member of the Aosdána told me that he feared it would be impossible to fill all the available places, but it is early days yet.

The Aosdána has various self-conscious Bardic titles and titles, but the most significant of these is the *Crúnaí*, (literally, the Treasure). If a member forswears all forms of financial reward other than those for creative endeavour, he or she can for five years receive a salary, at present £4,000 a year. Currently the Irish state

enables at least forty-four artists and writers to live in moderate comfort while concentrating on their creative work.

The Irish Academy of Letters is not to be confused with the Royal Irish Academy, founded in 1785 and holding on to its Royal prefix in Republican Dublin by virtue of its charter from George III. Its committee of Polite Literature and Antiquities and its Committee of Science have spawned some forty sub-committees which make it the primary academic institution throughout Ireland.

In 1975 the Academy completed the publication of its *Dictionary of the Irish Language*, begun in 1913, and it is now working on a dictionary of modern Irish, *Foclóir na Nua-Ghaeilge*, using Irish throughout. What the Academy is conspicuously not producing is a dictionary of Irish English, which would do for the language what Webster's did for American and the *OED* for English.

The need for such a work is the theme of a remarkable pamphlet by the Ulster poet, Tom Paulin, *A New Look at the Language Question*, published by the Field Day Theatre Company in Derry (0 946755 00 0). This, together with Seamus Heaney's *An Open Letter* (0 946755 01 9) and Seamus Deane's *Civilians and Barbarians* (0 946755 02 7), was published last year and has already become a collector's item.

The bibliographical interest, however, is secondary to the nationalist connections all three pamphlets make between language, culture and politics in contemporary Ireland. (The work of the Field Day Company is best known through Brian Friel's play, *Translations*.) A further three Field Day pamphlets are to be published shortly.

When Tyrone Guthrie died in 1971 he left his family home at Annaghmakerrig in Co Monaghan as a residential retreat for artists and writers. In 1981, with money from the Northern Irish Arts Council, the Irish Arts Council and the Council of Europe, the house reopened with accommodation for up to ten artists, including a studio and a music room. Since then nearly a thousand people have spent periods of from one week to three months in the most perfect surroundings for creativity and contemplation.

The centre is run by Bernard Loughlin

whose chief asset as director appears to be that he has no ambition to write himself, and that when he was appointed he was innocent of Irish literary politics, a condition he tries to maintain. The atmosphere is that of an idealized literary country house. "We don't set out to be the Coole Park of 1984, but obviously that is at the back of our minds." While I was there two poets, three artists, an American dancer and an American playwright were in residence.

The Tyrone Guthrie Centre costs some £60,000 a year to run, and Loughlin would like to see the Scottish, Welsh and English Arts Councils contribute to its support. Irish artists from North and South can get substantial help to go there, overseas visitors are expected to pay the £500 a month it costs to stay. The qualifications for a residency are deliberately loosely drawn, but the Centre's board pays particular attention to specific projects. I can think of no better atmosphere in which to write.

One way of showing respect for the world's cosset writers, another is to censor them. The 1929 Censorship of Publications Board still operates in the Republic, although in 1946 a modification was introduced which limited the banning of a book to twelve years, after which the case is reconsidered. As Chairman of the Irish Book Marketing Group, Harold Clarke seized on the presence of the Irish Prime Minister at the Top of the Irish launch to attack the continuation of censorship.

Literary publishers say they no longer feel censorship a problem, but as a bookseller Harold Clarke plainly does. Among the books recently banned are Harold Robbins's *Good-bye Janette* and Jerzy Kosinski's *Cockpit*. The power of the Church seems to be behind the banning of books published by the National Abortion Campaign. Macmillan, Sphere, W. H. Allen, Penguin and Granada have all had titles banned in the last twelve months.

Harold Clarke points to the absurdity of banning *The Book of Love* when it had sold 50,000 copies already, but more seriously to the existence of censorship in the South is a "literary wedge" between the two communities. What North and South have in common is the law of libel, and Clarke's own firm Eason declined to carry the Poolbeg Press's runaway success *The Boss* (400pp IR£6.50 0 905169 0 7), Joe Joyce and Peter Murrigh's revealing account of the 1982 premiership of Charles Haughey.

AMONG THIS WEEK'S CONTRIBUTORS

Isobel Armstrong is Professor of English at the University of Southampton. Zygmunt Bauman is the author of *Hermeneutics and Social Science*, 1978. Andrew Brown is Scandinavian correspondent of the *Spectator*. James Campbell's *Invisible Country: A Journey through Scotland* has just been published. R. B. Campbell is co-author, with A. S. Skinner, of *Adam Smith*, 1982. Raymond Carr's most recent book, *Puerto Rico: A colonial experiment*, has just been published. Stephen Clark is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Liverpool. Patrick Collinson's latest book is *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism*, 1983. David Dalcho is Director of the Institute of Advanced Studies in Humanities at the University of Edinburgh. T. M. Devine's *Farm Servants and Labour in Lowland Scotland, 1770-1914* will be published later this year. D. J. Enright's most recent book, *A Mania for Sentences*, was published last year. David Fitzpatrick is the author of *Politics and Irish Life*, 1977. Roy Foster's books include *Lord Randolph Churchill: A political life*, 1981. Roy Foster's third volume of autobiography, *Home and Dry*, was published earlier this year. James Graham-Campbell is Reader in Medieval Archaeology at University College London. Colin Greenland is co-editor of *Interzone: The magazine of imaginative fiction*. Michael Ignatieff is the author of *A Just Measure of Pain: Penitentiaries in the Industrial Revolution in England 1750-1850*, 1978. Gavin Kennedy is Senior Lecturer in Economics at the University of Strathclyde. C. A. Longhurst is head of Spanish at the University of Leeds. Noel Malcolm's *De Dominis 1560-1624: Venetian, Anglican, ecumenist and relapsed heretic* has just been published. David Martin is Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Michael Mason is a lecturer in English at University College London. Ian Nish's books include *Anglo-Japanese Alliances, 1919-32*, 1982. David Nokes is a lecturer in English at King's College, London. Geoffrey Norris's *Rakitinov* was published in 1976. Iaroslav Pary's collection of essays *Hand to Mouth* was published in 1981. Simon Rae's poems appeared in Faber's *Poetry Introduction* 5, 1982. Stephen Roper edits the bi-lingual review *TwoFold*. Hugh Seton-Watson has recently retired as Professor of Russian History at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies. A. J. Sherman's books include *Island Refugees: Britain and refugees from the Third Reich 1933-1939*, 1973. John Shy is currently Hartnwood Professor of American History at the University of Oxford. Barry Supple is Professor of Economic History at the University of Cambridge. Robert Taylor is Head of Research at the Independent Broadcasting Authority. Michael Welch is the author of *Under the Gaily Colours: An historical commentary*, 1981.

Letters

Poetry Publishing

Sir, - The imbalance between the many writers and few readers of contemporary poetry to which Mick Imlah draws attention in his article "Poetry publishing and publishers" (April 27) is the fault both of much of our poetry and our society's idea of what poetry is expected to do. Seamus Heaney's dictum that "Poetry is out of the quarrel with ourselves and the quarrel with others is rhetoric" (*Preoccupations*, p34) could only be honoured as wisdom in an age so out of love with rhetoric and in love with psychoanalysis as our own. With so much else to entertain us or excite us (constant television, volumes of popular fiction, hundreds of newspapers and magazines) the majority of people for whom poetry is of interest tend to be those whose quarrel with themselves prompts them to compulsive self-expression. If they read poetry at all, it's to learn how to "do it themselves".

It seems to me that poetry as therapy, as a release from the tensions of mass society and as expression of individual struggle is a wholly admirable, even necessary human activity. Why should there not be as many amateur poets as amateur musicians and painters? The trouble arises when amateurs fall into the trap of expecting for themselves publication, fame, success and all the other tempting but potentially corrupting benefits which accrue to the lot of many "established" poets - whether these poets deserve them or not. In such a situation, the literary world becomes a hive of jealousies and antagonisms (as indeed it always has been), to which hell-house, nevertheless, hundreds cry for admittance.

The situation is exacerbated by the cold, fastidious verse of the new "establishment". Whereas the great Victorians offered their readers the consolations of a moral philosophy and a grand (rhetorical) sort of fatalism, a hundred years later we are hedged about with post-modernist prickles which have been nourished into a garden of thorns by the assiduous sowers of academia. What do you suppose Samuel Johnson, the bicentenary of whose death is being celebrated this year, would have thought of our new wave of poets? "Sir, this is mere paddling in language, as lacking in melody and grace of expression as it is devoid of moral principle and religion." Johnson was never noted for his accessibility to new ideas, but would Craig Raine and Paul Muldoon want to have to explain to him that since it is no longer possible (!) to write out of faith or hope, the burden of the poet's responsibility in 1984 rests upon an ironic realization of inhumanity and violence, consequent upon which a kind of helpless compassion replaces any understanding of true *caritas*?

It is my experience that poetry rooted in the profound *caritas* of the English language is still being written. It is as various in form as any other, but it's distinguished by its concern with far deeper and wider issues than self-analysis, or a sick desperation to find original language no matter what that language makes you say. Much of this "real" poetry has been hounded out of court by the ascendant "clevers" as it has been side-stepped by the populist "street-credible" bards. Apart from a few remarkable books from the major publishers, much of the finest poetry of recent years has appeared from those very small presses and journals to which Mick Imlah rather condescendingly refers in his article.

ANNE STEVENSON,
30 Logan Street, Langley Park, Durham.

'Opus Pistorum'

Sir, - Robert Hewison's remarks about *Opus Pistorum* (Behind the Lines, May 4) prompt me to add what first-hand knowledge I possess concerning this lamentable book. As a long-time admirer of the writing of Henry Miller it distresses me to see that a work so humourous and feeble could be considered genuine.

As a young man in the early 1950s I frequented the Larry Edmunds Bookshop in Hollywood, owned and operated by Milton Lubovick and his charming wife Git. This was before the paperback revolution, and many important modernist texts were available only in their original edition. Larry Edmunds was a treasure trove of first editions. For more than

ten years this bookshop was for me a major source of excitement and pleasure.

Milton also dealt in "erotica". It was known among his customers that bound carbon typewritten copies of *Opus Pistorum* by "Henry Miller" were for sale. Milton had befriended Miller a decade earlier and he respected my serious interest in Miller's work. On more than one occasion he offered to sell me a copy of *Opus Pistorum*. Significantly, although he undoubtedly desired to make the sale, Milton always stopped short of guaranteeing me that *Opus Pistorum* was the work of Miller himself.

During this period I made several trips up the California coast to Big Sur to visit Miller. Henry was then in serious financial straits. His only sources of support at that time were a \$50 monthly cheque from *New Directions*, occasional other small royalties, the assistance of a few friends, and a small income from selling signed copies of his own books to his readers. I was trying to build a complete collection of Miller's books and whenever I found a rare item, or whenever I purchased his latest book from him, he was kind enough to inscribe it to me. I had grave doubts about *Opus Pistorum*, and on one of my visits to Big Sur I took along a copy and asked him point-blank if he was the author, and if so would he sign it. I remember Henry carefully examining the carbon typewritten copy and then when he suddenly realized what he was looking at he became visibly upset. He stated angrily to me that he was not the author and that he absolutely would not endorse it by inscribing or signing it.

JOHN MARTIN,
Black Sparrow Press, Santa Barbara, California 93130.

Renaissance Poets and Dramatists

Sir, - As the author of *A Biographical Dictionary of Renaissance Poets and Dramatists, 1520-1650*, the first of its kind since the early eighteenth century, may I be allowed a reply, gentler than his, to R. V. Holdsworth's demolitionist review (May 11)? My previous books and papers were very well received. But, as a regular subscriber to the *TLS* since 1951, I have not seen a review as bad as this.

Holdsworth reveals immediately he has not read the preface. Any editor is bound to be selective, particularly about the Renaissance in which, as I have been saying for a long time, everybody was encouraged from school to write. In the preface I make quite clear that writers are included whose "chief contribution to history was in their writing". Excluded are not only writers in languages other than English, those who write chiefly in prose, and "leading courtiers... whose biography does not belong to a dictionary of writers", but also those whose "major contribution was made before 1520 or after 1650" and those whose "writings make up the first entries in a dictionary of American writers". I did not exclude writers whose works are not extant.

Nevertheless, Holdsworth recites a list, an A to Z of writers who should have been included. His A, William Alabaster, and Z, Richard Zouche, are pre-eminent writers of prose. He includes John Mason, the founder of New Hampshire, Thomas Killigrew, the holder of the Drury Lane patent, Sir Kenelm Digby and Robert Sidney, Viscount Lisle, who appear in my book as patrons (their politics and patronage were more important than their poetry), and so on, excluded in the preface.

He then calls my critical judgments "quaint or perfunctory", although he must know that criticism has no place in a biographical dictionary except where relevant to biography. To this end I restricted myself to Renaissance verdicts. Ben Jonson and his contemporaries knew he was the odd man out. His attempt to impose academic order, when they all wanted Renaissance freedom, was regarded as distinctly medieval. In modern hindsight we can see him reaching for the neo-classicism of the Augustans, but they weren't to know this. As for John Donne, who had many problems, I doubt if any of his friends, in those days of religious flexibility, would have regarded his primary problem as Roman Catholicism. And everybody knew Waller wrote love-poems in fashion. He addressed one poem to two different ladies.

The biggest single anomaly... is Thomas Middleton. I was aware while writing that a major evaluation of Middleton and his canon was under way, but I was not in a position to finalize matters of current controversy and cannot surely be blamed for not having done so. Editors are wary: for instance, a recent reevaluation of George Gascoigne has itself been revalued. Holdsworth may feel sure that at this stage *The Revenger's Tragedy* is "a play which it is now possible to attribute to Middleton as automatically as one attributes *Hamlet* to Shakespeare"; I do not share his confidence.

I have offered advice on further reading, whenever possible, to the general students and readers for whom the book is intended. I make no claim for comprehensiveness. The notion is that students who start with *DNB* might proceed step by step through my book to further study. I cannot conceive of any "harm" coming to them, as Holdsworth says, from this procedure. Those responsible for library purchase might consider my book in the light of these comments, and above all the preface, and are urged to consider its potential for verdicts less ephemeral than Holdsworth's.

J. W. SAUNDERS,
17 Benton Road, Middlesbrough, Cleveland.

Balkan History

Sir, - In his desire to defend the Albanians, Leonard Fox (Letters, May 4) aptly illustrates the danger in viewing the past in the terms of the present. Bridling against the word "collaborators", as though the 500 years of Turkish rule over the Balkans could be compared with that of the Germans in the last war, he correctly refers to Skanderbeg's resistance to Turkish rule in the fifteenth century and to the reluctance of Albanians to be conscripted into the Turkish army. However, conscription of Albanians was only introduced in the very last days of Turkish rule; and throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century, tens of thousands of Albanians, of all religions, took service every year as volunteer mercenary soldiers in the private forces of Turkish provincial governors.

Such men were justly feared by the Christian and Muslim populations of the Ottoman Empire because of their indiscipline and love of plunder. After the "Orlovi" revolt of the Greeks of the Morea in the 1770s, a special Ottoman expedition had to be launched to drive the wild Albanians back into their mountain fastnesses. There are many Greek klephtic ballads which show beyond question that to the Greeks, at least, the Albanians counted as the most feared allies of the Turks. And the most able and ruthless often themselves ended up as Turkish pashas, such as Ali Pasha of Tepelene, who came to govern almost all the present territory of Greece, and Muhammad Ali Pasha, who ended his career by founding a dynasty which governed Egypt for 150 years. All this could perhaps be labelled "collaboration", except that in the context of the Ottoman Empire such a word could have had little meaning to a people who probably for the bulk of this period could scarcely envisage an alternative to Turkish rule.

Q. E. O. EVANS,
137 Blackheath Park, London SE3.

Françoise Sagan

Sir, - In his most informative and perceptive review of Françoise Sagan's *Avec mon meilleur souvenir* (May 18), John Weightman mentions a life that "the French mysteriously call *une vie de bâtons de chaise*".

May I, as a Frenchman, say that there is nothing mysterious about the expression. It is self-explanatory, once one has understood that the chair is not an ordinary one, but *une chaise à porteurs* or sedan-chair. The *bâtons* are the poles obstructing the doors. Their life was indeed tempestuous, since they had rapidly to be removed each time the lord or the lady got into, or out of, the sedan.

W. J. LATHAM,
Marlborough College, Wiltshire.

Man Suddenly Sees to the Edge of the Universe by Richard Casement, reviewed in the *TLS* of April 20, is available direct from *The Economist*, 25 St. James's Street, London SW1 1HG at £4.95.

Basil Blackwell

Thomas Hardy's English

RALPH W.V. ELLIOTT

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A culture castrated

Hugh Seton-Watson

JOHN B. DUNLOP
The Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism
Nationalism
375pp. Princeton University Press. £30.
0691 05390 1

The term "nationalism" has several different meanings, on both sides of the Atlantic, and their confusion often dangerously obscures the thinking of politicians and people in the media. It can denote an awareness among the members of a community that they are a nation, united by a common culture and a common historical mythology. A second meaning has to do with the rights and claims of the nation, in practice usually some sort of adaptation to each community's needs of the Enlightenment doctrine of popular sovereignty. A third meaning concerns an organized political movement or party devoted to the pursuit of the alleged interests of the nation: the success of such movements depends on their leaders' ability to mobilize mass support by canalizing economic, social and constitutional discontents. Finally, the word is often used, in a simple pejorative sense, to denote policies not of nations (which are communities of people) but of states (which are organized systems of law and coercion): all too often the word "nationalism" simply means a policy pursued by the government of one state regardless of, or in contradiction to, the interests of other states.

"Russian nationalism" can mean, and often has meant, any of these four things. The first doctrines of Russian nationalism were developed by the Slavophiles of the mid-nineteenth century. A nationalist movement, directed mainly against the non-Russian peoples of the Tsarist Empire, began to be a major feature of Russian political life towards the end of the century. The supremacy not only of the Monarchy and the Orthodox Church but also of the Russian (that is, Russian-speaking) nation became part of the official view of the legitimacy of the state. "Russification", or imposition of Russian language and culture on non-Russian peoples (Ukrainians, Germans, Balts, Tatars and even that most recalcitrant people, the Poles) became the aim of many, but by no means of all, Russian bureaucrats and counsellors of the Tsar. In the Third and Fourth Dumas there were Nationalist deputies who held such views.

Cracks in the monolith

Michael Waller

SUSAN GROSS SOLOMON (Editor)
Pluralism in the Soviet Union: Essays in honour of H. Gordon Skilling
179pp. Macmillan. £20.
0333 34582 7

Proponents of the view that the Soviet political system can be described as pluralist have had a hard time defending their position. Their best chances occurred in the 1960s when a general disillusionment with the concept of the totalitarian society met with an attempt to integrate studies of the Soviet Union into the Western world's general discussion on comparative politics. That was a time, too, when people had begun to register the changes that had been taking place in the Soviet Union, first in the political climate following the severe cutting back of the apparatus of terror after Stalin's death and second in the political processes of an increasingly sophisticated industrial society. It was, in fact, the concept of industrial society that provided the bridge of convergence on which notions of pluralism were erected, and those notions were shaped accordingly: this was not the pluralism of an autonomous lobby, but of bureaucratic and institutional interests.

Unfortunately, to posit convergence was sufficient to bring about a reaction; but that reaction was an intriguingly complex one. The attribution of pluralism to the Soviet Union came under pressure; but in the Western world's analysis of its own political processes, too, pluralism was being called in question, and in both cases the discussion shifted to a

Russification and Russian nationalism were wholly rejected by the Bolsheviks, being identified with the Monarchy and the Church which they were resolved to destroy; also, as Marxists, they had a genuine moral detestation of the oppression by one nation of other nations. The Bolsheviks at first sincerely tried to carry out Lenin's directives to combat both "Great Russian great-power chauvinism" and "local bourgeois nationalism", and when in doubt to treat the former as the greater evil of the two. However the extremely centralized apparatus of the new state was inevitably manned overwhelmingly by Russians; and as the process of industrialization brought more and more tasks within the sphere of government, the need to make Russian – the native tongue of half the population – the language of official business in all parts of the Union became more pressing. In areas of non-Russian population it was inevitable that the discontents arising from the sufferings of the 1930s should be directed against Russians as such; and conversely that Russian officials confronted by discontent should see their non-Russian subjects as unreliable and disloyal citizens. Inevitably in Moscow "local bourgeois nationalism" came to be regarded as the greater of the two dangers; and this was confirmed by Stalin himself at the 17th Congress of the CPSU in 1934. In the Second World War Stalin went still further in appealing to traditional Russian patriotism, and even encouraged the Orthodox Church to make its own contribution to national morale. Much was also made in official propaganda of the historical traditions of the Russian army, and the glories achieved by Suvorov, Kutuzov and lesser generals of the Tsars.

All this confirmed non-Russians in their belief that the Soviet government was reviving Russification, and that not so much communist rule as Russian rule was the source of their woes. But to Russians who cared about Russian culture and the Russian past, Soviet policy appeared quite differently. The Soviet leaders, as they saw it, were in no sense Russian nationalists: they merely exploited Russian national feeling for their own ends. They still insisted on Marxist interpretation of everything. They still refused to accept the Russian historical legacy. Though they might find it useful to glorify military traditions, they rejected the continuity of past and present, denouncing what they called the heresy of the "single stream" (*edinyi potok*). The history of both Russia and the human race remained fun-

damentally divided in two by one event far surpassing any other of any time or any place: the Great October Socialist Revolution. In particular, they sought to delete from Russian national identity any religious dimension. Thus, though the leaders of the regime gladly exploited Russian military pride, and treated non-Russians in a manner that recalled Russification under the Tsars, all that they had to offer was a castrated Russian national culture, an outward shell of a tradition deprived of its true content. Thus to thinking Russian patriots the Russian nation was the victim of the regime, no less and perhaps even more than the non-Russian nations. There emerged a form of Russian nationalism which was a force not of the government but of opposition: the enemy was not a brand of nationalism but an anti-national anti-cultural Moloch state, claiming to act on behalf of "the working class" but designed to flatten out and destroy all national cultures.

The Brezhnev era was marked by a revival among thinking Russians of Russian nationalism in the first of the meanings noted above, by what it is really best to describe not as nationalism but as "national consciousness". This is the subject of John B. Dunlop's excellent book, which summarizes and analyses the various trends which contributed to this result. Its origins were not necessarily political. There was an unmistakable growth of public interest in historical monuments, buildings and churches, and in earlier periods of Russian history, including the Kiev and Moscow eras. The authorities were not at first hostile. In 1964 permission was given to found the Homeland (*rodina*) Club to promote the study of historical monuments. In 1965 was formed an official body, the All-Russian Society for the Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments (Russian initials VOPIK), which in January 1977 had over twelve million members. It had some high officials among its directors, but its activities came under criticism from others – clearly showing that opinions were divided at the upper levels of the Soviet state. This division became clearer still during a public polemic between the Komsomol journal *Molodaya Gvardiya* and the influential *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, arising out of two articles in the former by Viktor Chalmayev, of a pronounced Russian national cultural flavour, which were attacked by no less a personage than the acting head of the Agitprop Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU, A. N. Yakovlev. In the end some of those involved in the polemic were

denoted, but neither side can be said to have defeated the other.

There are thus grounds for thinking that Russian nationalism had its protectors at the highest level, a "National Bolshevik" group in the early 1970s there was a thorough discussion of issues of Russian national culture and religion, with direct reference from time to time to the Slavophil controversies of the last century, in the *Samizdat* press, especially in the *Pravda*, which was produced in the years 1970-1974. Some of the outstanding articles from this discussion are printed in sixty pages of appendices to Dunlop's book, and make an impressive reading. In the later 1970s oppositional activities of two Orthodox priests, Father's Dudko and Yakunin, were seen as a continuation of the same trend, several "religious-philosophical seminars" were held in Moscow and in Leningrad, which young people discussed Russian religious and cultural problems. Sporadic persecution and arrests did not deter them until 1980, when the authorities decided on complete suppression. The whole story is told, and full attention paid to the religious aspect and discussion of the relations between Russia and others ("the nationalities question") in a book, which no one who wishes to understand Soviet affairs can afford to miss.

Several basic questions remain unanswered. How far has the religious revival gone? How far is it due to growing horror at phenomena of alcoholism, infant mortality, corruption and the venality of state and party officials? Are such worries confined to a relatively small proportion of the 15 per cent so known as the intelligentsia, or do they tend to the working class? Is the belief in a Russian cultural nationalism, that true consciousness is possible between themselves and the Russians on the basis of mutual respect and mutual illusion? What are the prospects of "National Bolshevism"? Will it turn out to be yet another case of the regime exploiting national feeling for its own ends, or is there a chance that an uncastrated Russian national consciousness may penetrate and transform the leadership? What does the next generation of communist leaders, whose advent to power has only been postponed by the succession of Chernenko, feel about these things? The questions cannot be brushed aside as mere speculation. On the answers to them depend the future of Russia and of much more besides.

coining the phrase "mono-archies" for the "communist polities", and offers a succinct and shrewd examination of the question whether "marketization" of the economy may be a factor leading to "pluralization" of the polity (his conclusion is that political struggles are primary, but that marketization is one of the loci of that struggle). Archie Brown traces the evolution of the argument about pluralism in the Soviet Union, records the difficulties which it presents, and then gives an informative account of what Soviet theorists have to say on the distribution of power in their society. Jerry Hough's contribution is of particular interest in that he perhaps more than anyone else has come to be associated with the view that the Soviet Union can be said to be pluralist. Here he offers a qualified defence of his position. He acknowledges the value of a corporatist approach, claims that what is valuable about one approach can often be reconciled with what is valuable in another, and insists that "what is important is that we understand the reality that the label tried to convey".

It is the essays by Solomon, Hough and Brown which really tackle the question of what "pluralism" might mean in a Soviet context, and of what value there is in continuing to favour its use. Their discussion of these questions prompts two comments. The first is to endorse a logical point which Hough makes, carelessness over which has bedevilled the discourse on Soviet politics and on communist politics in general. In that discourse an obsession with models has led to an assumption that all labels are mutually exclusive – that pluralism drives out totalitarianism; and that similarly corporatism must drive out pluralism. Such

conceptual lurches are, of course, inevitable. They derive in this case largely from two assertive statements about a political system about which after all we are not fully informed and from over-aggressive reactions to those statements. A lot of people have said a lot of sensible things, but these sensible things have not been built into a sensitive overall picture. It is a jigsaw with its pieces originally made to fit, and such as would fit have had their sharp edges rubbed off by over-enthusiastic players.

Concepts can, of course, encompass phenomena which do conflict; but the extent of the conflict may vary, and is rarely if ever total. Hough describes as pluralist phenomena which a totalitarian analysis cannot easily accommodate, this does not deprive him from arguing that the same phenomena can be used as evidence in support of a different argument, as one which advances the notion of corporatism. Hough's critics risk being hoisted on their own petard when the merry-go-round has come again and the Soviet Union is being labelled longer as corporatist but as something else.

A second comment concerns a last opportunity. Both Solomon and Brown bring to the discussion the philosophical notion of pluralism which were around in Britain in the first quarter of this century, where the emphasis was on a distinction between monism and pluralism. At first sight this seems of little relevance; but in fact both Bruns' chapters and Brown's treatment of the views of Soviet theorists provide material for a more integrated discussion of the philosophical aspects of pluralism than this symposium has been able to provide. But it is no novelty for a good book to raise questions beyond the ones it answers.

Posing and exposing

David Daiches

IAIN FINLAYSON
The Moth and the Candle: A life of James Boswell
273pp. Constable. £9.95.
009 465540 5

James Boswell continues to fascinate us as much as he fascinated himself. Now that we have so much of his autobiographical writing coming scrupulously edited from the great Yale Boswell Factory we can study his character in a way that is rarely possible with any writer, living or dead. Boswell was an obsessive self-describer and self-examiner, a poseur who detailed exhaustively the nature of and the reasons for his different poses, a hero-worshiper always on the look-out for heroes to worship who at the same time had the extraordinary ability to expose himself to his heroes so disarmingly that he elicited from them if not an equal exposure then at least some remarkable admissions and revelations. He stage-managed great characters – Rousseau, Voltaire, Paoli and, most of all, Johnson – in order to get them to act themselves as fully as possible.

All this is revealed in his journals and in his *Life of Johnson*, together with much more. He was a bundle of contradictions, a man whose behaviour sometimes arouses our anger or contempt and an irresistibly attractive personality for whom, in spite of everything, we

develop a real affection. At different times in his life he had ambitions to be a glittering army officer, a brilliant Court wit, a landed gentleman beloved by his tenants, a powerful political figure and other things besides. Although he took great pride in his biography of Johnson, it does not seem to have occurred to him that with it he found his true role in which he would achieve immortality as one of the greatest biographers of the English language. We now know also that he was a remarkable diarist, combining introspection and observation in a way that makes for compulsive reading.



In full expansion

T. M. Devine

SYDNEY AND OLIVE CHECKLAND
Industry and Ethos: Scotland 1832-1914
218pp. Edward Arnold. £5.95.
07131 63178

Industry and Ethos covers the period of fundamental change in modern Scottish history. As late as the 1830s, Scotland was still mainly a rural society despite the urban growth and textile revolution of the previous generation. By the middle decades of the nineteenth century, however, it had entered a new phase of immense and rapid structural change fashioned by the extraordinary scale of development in coal, iron, steel, ships and engineering; by 1900 the Scots lived in an urban and industrial civilization with all of its benefits, costs and pressures.

The achievement of fast economic growth and the transformation of social, political and religious relationships which ensued form the twin themes of Sydney and Olive Checkland's survey of the Scottish experience in the Victorian and Edwardian periods. In their introductory chapters they vividly capture the excitement and pace of expansion through which the Scots became, for a brief period, world industrial leaders. In the Checklands' view this reflected a combination of access of English and world markets, the religious and educational traditions which were conducive to economic success, the natural advantages of abundant

reserves of coal and iron and the thrusting entrepreneurship of the new race of industrial magnates.

The discussion of material development then provides the necessary context for an evaluation of the social changes wrought by the industrial process. Scottish urbanization concentrated on the four old-established centres of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee and Aberdeen. Each focus had its own particular economic, social and cultural configuration, but all four were pioneers in a new era. Of Glasgow the authors note, "Here was a society in which industrial urbanisation had gone as far as anywhere in the world: it was classical of its kind, attracting observers from many countries, especially the United States." Further chapters consider the relationship between industrialization, class and politics and assess the impact on the welfare of the people. A brief examination of trends in Scottish culture reveals a tendency on the part of writers and painters to turn away from the harsh realities of the new industrial order and to seek refuge in pastoral and historical themes. The Checklands do not ignore the problem of the Scots in Britain and the world, and give an interesting assessment of the Scottish influence on overseas trade and investment, especially in Canada and the Far East where it was most decisive, and on missionary activity, particularly in Africa, where David Livingstone was only the most famous of a large group of Scottish enthusiasts.

Industry and Ethos is the first attempt at a general evaluation of this key period in Scot-

land history since William Ferguson's *Scotland: 1689 to the Present*, which was published in 1968. It clearly demonstrates the new approach to the study of the Scottish past. Politics becomes a secondary theme while material forces and their effects are placed squarely at the centre of the analysis. The élites receive due consideration but much attention is also focused on the mass of the Scottish people. Scotland is consistently viewed within a British and international context, so avoiding the parochialism often evident in traditional Scottish historiography. This book, then, reveals how far Scottish history has developed over the last two decades, a period which has seen a quite remarkable increase in the quality and quantity of scholarly research in this field. But, equally, the volume also suggests the gaps and limitations in the work completed thus far. It is strongest on industrial and economic history, where publication has been most active, but weaker on social structure, politics and religion where research is still in its infancy. Perhaps it is the unevenness of the data as much as the limitation of less than 200 pages of text which also explains why the emphasis tends towards description and recording of fact rather than systematic analysis. As a compensation, however, controversial and interesting ideas are regularly presented which will help to provide fuel for many a tutorial discussion. Students will find it a readable survey and the authors have provided a useful guide to further sources for those who require detailed treatment of particular themes.

Such a character is a gift to the biographer, and Iain Finlayson has written a lively account of Boswell's many-faceted life. Whether another biography of Boswell was necessary is arguable, but he emerges convincingly and entertainingly from Mr Finlayson's pages, it not quite as vividly as he does in his own journals. The problem is one of selecting quotations and embedding them in a narrative that accommodates them comfortably and illuminatingly. The biographer must distance himself enough from Boswell to be able to see him in his time and place and reconstruct the context and quality of his life for the modern reader, while at the same time, if not being Boswell as Boswell himself at different times wanted to be "different characters, achieving sufficient inwardness with his kaleidoscopic consciousness to be able to convey what it was like to be him. Finlayson has used his sources sensibly and combined the tasks of observing and evoking with considerable skill.

There is a surprisingly fulsome tribute to D. B. Wyndham Lewis's biography among the acknowledgments and frequent quotations from that work. One of them, in which Lewis brackets John Wilkes and David Hume as persons who regarded Johnson "in his moral aspect" as "what the intelligentsia today would naturally label a fascist, as Johnson often went into a church without the intention of burning it down", is arrant nonsense. Boswell's relation to Hume was in any case considerably more complex than Finlayson indicates. Describing

Boswell's part in the extraordinary Stratford Shakespeare Jubilee celebrations of 1769, Finlayson quotes from Samuel Foote's wittily malicious account of that event and adds, mysteriously, "But that, as D.B. Wyndham Lewis observes, is 'pretty Fanny's way'." This presumably refers to Foote's description rather than to Boswell's activities, though this is not made absolutely clear. Nor is it made clear that the observation quoted from Lewis is from a once well-known poem by the minor eighteenth-century poet Thomas Parnell, "An Elegy to an Old Beauty". The relevant passage reads:

And all that's madly wild, or oddly gay,
We call it only pretty Fanny's way.
It was surely Boswell rather than Foote who was "madly wild, or oddly gay", but doubt remains as to whether Finlayson recognized the quotation.

One gains the impression that Finlayson is not fully at home in eighteenth-century literature and that his understanding of Boswell, though soundly based on a reading of both primary and secondary sources, is not deepened by any great knowledge of other writers of the period. This is not to say that one wishes that his book were more academic. On the contrary, one of its virtues is its freshness. Yet one could have wished for a more sophisticated awareness of the intellectual climate of the time. At another level, it is interesting to see that use has been made of a secondary source not listed in the bibliography, William Ober's *Boswell's Clap and Other Essays*: the Boswell essay in this volume, first published in the *Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine* in 1969, is a remarkable medical and psychological exploration of Boswell's sex life by a learned American pathologist. Its use, however briefly, by Finlayson reminds us that what he has given us is a modern presentation of Boswell done with considerable verve.

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THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF SPORTS HISTORY

Editors: Tony Morgan, John Leverton, Richard Cox

Subscription: £18.00 individuals; £30.00 institutions. First issue out May 1984.

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Laboratory fodder

Stephen Clark

ANDREW N. ROWAN
OF Mice, Models, and Men: A critical
evaluation of animal research
232pp. Albany: State University of New York
Press. \$34.50 (paperback, \$12.95).
087395 7768

Andrew N. Rowan has in the past been scientific adviser to FRAME (Fund for the Replacement of Animals in Medical Experiments), and editor of the *International Journal for the Study of Animal Problems*. He is now an assistant lecturer in Tufts School of Veterinary Medicine in Boston, and a respected figure in the world of animal welfare. His book is in the same tradition as W. M. S. Russell and R. L. Burch's *Principles of Humane Experimental Technique*, or the many publications of the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare: more reformist than radical, but with a sympathetic understanding of the radical case for "animal rights" rather than merely "animal welfare". It is a model of what such studies should be.

The bulk of Dr Rowan's book is concerned with the American scene, where many states require that stray dogs and cats be handed to laboratories on demand, the British Act of 1876 (currently under review) is widely regarded as a draconian interference in "scientific liberty", and the supposed "right" of the research scientist to determine what will be done to or for experimental animals is regularly defended by attacks upon "obscurantist loathing of scientific progress". Edward Taub, for example, whose original six convictions for grossly negligent treatment of his monkeys were reduced on appeal to a single conviction, which has (since Rowan's book went to press) been quashed on a technicality, apparently sees himself as a "modern-day Galileo".

With due considerateness

Mary Furness

MARY MIDDLEY
Animals and Why They Matter: A journey
round the species barrier
158pp. Penguin. Paperback, £1.95.
01402386 X
RICHARD NORTH
The Animals Report
176pp. Penguin. Paperback, £1.95.
0140522573

Man's treatment of animals - in sport, in zoos or circuses, as producers of food, as pets, in scientific research and so on - is a subject which notoriously gives rise to extreme reactions. There are those who are, or who profess to be, on the side of the animal against its exploitation by humans. These range from the lone vegetarian to organizations such as the RSPCA, the Anti-Vivisectionists and the extreme Animal Liberation Front. Opposing them there are those who, broadly speaking, have vested interests in maintaining the status quo (farmers, scientists, zoo and circus owners for example), who may be genuinely concerned about the welfare of the animals with which they deal, but only up to the point at which concern begins to interfere with their own interests. The issue, stripped bare of confusion, is not (not any more) about whether it is all right to be cruel to animals, but about what constitutes cruelty. But the issue is surrounded with confusion, partly because it is one in which emotions run high, and partly because of its subjective nature. Both Mary Midgley and Richard North aim, in their different ways, to clear away some of this confusion. Both call for mature consideration to be given to the issue, and believe that, given such consideration, the conclusion inevitably follows that animals ought to be treated with more sympathy than they often are.

In *Why Animals Matter*, Mary Midgley approaches the subject from a philosophical point of view and shows that the traditional opposition between reason and emotion is behind much of the disagreement about the status of animals. It is because rationality has been regarded (by Descartes and Spinoza for example) as the exclusive preserve of man, in virtue

though the charges against him concerned only the filth and lack of veterinary attention which his maimed monkeys (now lost to him, it is to be hoped, for ever) had to endure.

Self-defensive scientists, artificially selected as those who are willing to ignore most of the qualms they may feel about harassing, hurting or killing animals in a "scientific" context, usually rely on rhetoric, emotional scenes and personal abuse to intimidate their fellow citizens (including any scientists who have retained their critical faculties). It is a major strength of Rowan's indictment that he is not afraid to acknowledge that animal welfare enthusiasts often behave as badly, and are as susceptible as scientists to the influence of myth, to the idea (for example) that there are simple alternatives to experimentation on whole animals that "the scientists" are concealing, or that thalidomide was properly tested by the standards of the time, or that we have not profited from animal experimentation. Just as it is psychologically necessary for professional experimenters to believe that their work is irreducibly valuable, so it is also tempting for protesters to believe that such work is genuinely worthless. Neither side is likely to be entirely correct, and Rowan's survey of the arguments for and against the theses that this or that piece of research was profitable, necessary to gain that profit, or ethically defensible, gives his argument (that sound scientific practice itself would benefit from a more careful and ethically alert approach) considerable strength.

Part of the problem arises from institutional pressures: the graduate's need to make his tiny mark, the untenured lecturer's need not to annoy his superior. This may often mean that too little attention is given to asking whether some particular information is really worth acquiring, or whether some other, less oppressive technique might do as well. There are also

external pressures: the notorious LDSO test, devised in the 1920s, is used for bureaucratic and legalistic ends, not because it has any serious toxicological status. How much of a given substance (distilled water, say) will kill half the test population (the other half, of course, will be killed as well) depends on the time of day, the temperature, the number of animals per cage, when they were last fed. The published figure for distilled water, incidentally (whose determination Rowan not unreasonably calls a "prime example of gratuitous and unthinking cruelty"), is 469 millilitres per kilogram of body-weight - in albino rats. The experimenters (they can hardly be called scientists) "had methodological problems in this study because administration of more than 280 ml of distilled water (in 70 ml lots) resulted in water being expelled from the anus as fast as it was given intragastrically". Such studies, even of substances more toxic than distilled water, are of minimal value in determining exactly how dangerous something is to human beings.

The LDSO test shares with the Draize test (in which possibly corrosive or irritating substances are dripped into rabbits' eyes) the doubtful honour of being the test usually selected for criticism by animal welfare groups. Behavioural research also, deservedly, attracts hostile review, particularly as it is especially vulnerable to the charge that if animals are unlike humans then their reactions to stress, "inescapable punishment", and deprivation will not be relevant to the human case; if they are enough like us for us to be able to learn about human behaviour by seeing (say) how long rats can stay afloat before they drown, then such an experiment must be accounted evil (as we would reckon any similar experiment on consenting human subjects). Rowan is not content to condemn: he also provides clear guidelines which would, while allowing more animal experimentation than

strict "animal rightists" would like, cut down on the suffering and distress involved; reward, for example, should be preferred to punishment, and attention given to the normal behaviour of animals. Failure to do this latter, of course, is a source of much sloppy experimental technique, as well as gratuitous distress.

Rowan believes that we all desire an end to animal experimentation, but differ on the practical time-scale. It is not clear that he is entirely correct: some scientists, understandably, enjoy the exercise of their own professional skills, and imagine that "animals" are so far beyond the moral pale as to present no obstacles at all to human use. But even such backwardness cannot be entirely at ease in the new intellectual climate: we are all engaged in rethinking our relationship with the non-human world and our "fellow-voyagers in the odyssey of evolution". It is very much to be hoped that researchers will consider Rowan's case-studies, and strive to adopt his practical suggestions. Some of these will already be familiar to scientists working under British law, but they too may profit from a serious attention to A.P. Silverman's suggested questions for the would-be researcher: "How great is the likely benefit to mankind at large? What is the private benefit to the experimenter, in terms of money, prestige or the PhD? And what is the cost to the animal?" (emphasis added by Rowan). These questions cannot be sensibly answered without more attention to the extraordinary muddle of emotivism, utilitarianism and legal positivism that most scientists seem to use in lieu of a coherent moral theory - a topic that Dr Rowan regards as beyond his brief - but moral philosophers engaged in that enterprise must, in their turn, take account of the practicalities he discusses. All that is missing - from his hands or another's - is a similarly magisterial study of the British and European dimension.

expected - such as that, for example, fishing may cause more pain to fish than foxhunting does to foxes. He confesses that his book is, in a way, a piece of propaganda, but at the same time claims to be putting the facts before his readers so that they may decide for themselves.

What we are left with is the proposition that wanton or unnecessary cruelty to animals is wrong, one with which few people would disagree (even those who are accused by others of cruelty to animals). But it gives rise to the apparently unanswerable question of what is wanton or unnecessary. Is it, for example, unnecessarily cruel to milk cows by machinery, to take their calves from them at birth, to humanize them artificially? Similarly the force of the "as possible" in the exhortation, with which most of us would in theory agree, to give the animals in our power lives that are as pleasant as possible, is necessarily vague. Do the holy cows in India have pleasant lives than the intensively milked ones in England? What would be the pleasantest possible life for a cow, and do we have it in our power to give it to them? (It is possible, at no brutalizing cost to the humans involved, for a family to keep a pig or a lamb, which is treated and felt for as a pet, but which is ultimately slaughtered for food).

Whereas North addresses himself to the details of our treatment of animals, Midgley is concerned with the theoretical outlines and therefore finds it easier to present a conclusion: she suggests that it is for our own good that we should be concerned about animals - not only are humans part of the animal kingdom, but they are also capable (the poets, scientists and children among them in particular) of taking an interest in things unlike themselves. If they dismiss this type of interest as useless, they are suppressing the poetic, the scientific and the childlike in themselves. It is therefore ultimately for their own happiness and fulfilment that humans should interest themselves in the welfare of animals. In this she appears to share Aristotle's view that self-interest in the sense of aiming to achieve one's own happiness and moral goodness, are one and the same thing. It would be attractive, but almost certainly too simple, to say that the poet who is an unhappy man and so is the man who is cruel to animals, but there is surely some truth in it.

The Visitor

A ribcage; shoulder blades too sharp for comfort; skeletal arms and legs; a skein of hair, a half-expectant stare. She is, now,

like a visitor to a large museum who has entered from a snowbound city street and slowly removed her scarf, hat, gloves, coat, even her husband's thick Mexican sweater.

She stands, holding her garments as if they no longer belong to her. Uncertain, unable to move, she decides

to check them, receives in exchange a plastic tag in the low numbers. Unencumbered, she floats, mute, into the main exhibit.

ALICE KAVOUNAS

Anglican annals

David Martin

PAULA A. WELSBY
A History of the Church of England 1945-1980
300pp. Oxford University Press. £15.
0192132318

This book is an exercise in what St Paul calls "good report" and in *sagesse*. Paul A. Welsby has lived laborious days with the files and careful hours with the minutes; and he has come up with a clear, serviceable *alide-memoire*, for which much thanks.

Three archbishops of Canterbury provide his frame, those of Geoffrey Fisher, Michael Ramsey and Donald Coggan. The retirement of Fisher in 1961 provides the other main division: before the 1960s and after. Each archbishop is given a profile. Fisher, for example, is characterized as efficient, pragmatic and headmasterly and rather too inclined, in Canon Welsby's view, to write to *The Times* after he had retired. He set forward the cause of ecumenism, put clerical stipends on a better footing, presided over the revision of canon law and reduced the degree of anarchy in the Church. But basically things stayed much the same - except by mavericks like the Unitarian Bishop Barnes, Christian doctrine was not much controverted. It was still possible in 1955 for Mrs Margaret Knight to cause a furore by criticizing religious beliefs and ethics on the BBC Home Service. The Alternative Services

had not yet, like plump cuckoos, displaced the Book of Common Prayer.

Every now and then, Welsby provides us with a backgrounder; for example, to mark the beginning of Michael Ramsey's period at Canterbury, which starts with a sort of flashback to 1956, when "British forces were attacking Suez" and "Russian tanks were moving into Bulgaria" (*sic*). From that point on, says Welsby, British self-confidence waned and a section of the nation (undefined) "adopted a defensive and almost fearful attitude towards the avant-garde" (also undefined). At the same time, affluence and materialism burgeoned and with them, part consequence, part reaction, the beginnings of counter-culture, either by way of young people dropping out or looking back in anger. The 1960s, he says, were to become a decade of causes such as Race, the Bomb, Cuba, Biafra, Vietnam, Oxfam, War on Want, Christian Action, Save the Children and Voluntary Service Overseas, which he sees as "the positive side of the protest movement".

There was, however, according to Welsby, a dark and more sinister side to this voice of protest, by which he means a rising prison population and race riots. After some more about progressive legislation, Christine Keeler, etc, we arrive at a sage conclusion to the effect that "no progress is indeed possible for those who are chained to the past", though happily it is a cause for thankfulness that the people of this

country failed - as they were, perhaps, bound to fail - to kill the past, with the result that the seventies saw a revival of interest and involvement in past history and in the roots of our civilization.

After this exercise in providing a sort of head teacher's end-of-year report in the school mag, we turn back with considerable relief to the Church. We have sections on the debate about God, leading up to the secular theologians, the new situational morality, Teilhard and the Report on Religion in School entitled *The Fourth R*. There follows the Paul Report, concerned with the rationalization of the Church, the crisis of recruitment and finance in the theological colleges, and the transition from Church Assembly to General Synod. After that come discussions of liturgy, new versions of the Bible and ecumenism.

The 1970s begin with another backgrounder, ie, the fading "white heat of technological revolution" and "the muted voice of the enthusiastic liberalism of the previous decade". At this point, one suspects that the Archbishops' "Call to the Nation" gave Welsby a cue for talking about Northern Ireland, environmental concerns, the new Diocese of Europe, religion in Eastern Europe, abortion, homosexuality, divorce and euthanasia, all under the heading "Church and Nation".

The last sections of the book are concerned with the rising power of the evangelicals, the charismatic movements, exorcism, the National Initiative for Evangelism, as well as the controversies surrounding the Alternative

Services Book, the ordination of women and the World Council of Churches, notably the grants from the "Special Fund" towards certain Third World liberation movements.

It is, of course, extraordinarily difficult to order a jumble of disparate events into a coherent, continuous narrative, where events have a logic as well as a sequence, and where the operation of power is discernible. Perhaps we should be grateful, at least, for a series of careful summaries of reports, issues and debates, so long as nobody suspects that this is a *history*.

Apart from some rich distortion of the protest against the new services, I notice some rather odd omissions. The impact of Edward Norman's Reith Lectures is elided. The extraordinary conflicts over religion in the BDC are ignored. Likewise the conflicts over the Sheffield Industrial Mission are not thought worth going into. As for changes in the universities, the rise of conservative evangelicalism should surely lead to some analysis of the startling decline of the liberal Student Christian Movement. Perhaps the shifting emphases of the church newspapers could also have been discussed.

One major shift is more illustrated by Paul A. Welsby than discussed by him. It is the way he talks of the "insiders" who man the apparatus and "hear its voice", and the rest. I suspect that what matters historically is precisely this: the rising wall of division between insider and so-called "tribal Christians".

Secular systematizing

Robert Towler

BRYAN S. TURNER
Religion and Social Theory: A materialist
perspective
264pp. Heinemann. £15 (paperback, £5.95).
0433828940

Contemporary sociology of religion, according to Bryan S. Turner, suffers from three major weaknesses. It has been disconnected from the recent debates in sociological theory, it has been over-concerned with the subjectivity of the social actor and it has had a parochial focus on exclusively Western forms of religion. In his textbook *Religion and Social Theory* Professor Turner attempts to remedy these weaknesses by comparative discussions of Judaism, Islam and Christianity, and by extensive references to the writings of Althusser and Foucault. The result is a book which is interesting and thoroughly worth while, but finally unsatisfying.

Turner brings to the study of religion the shrewd detachment of a theoretician unswayed by first-hand empirical observations. This is useful, for it enables him to identify weaknesses only vaguely sensed by the empirical observer. He points out, for example, that text-books on the sociology of religion rarely

mention either death or sex (on this score the present reviewer is justly lambasted with the rest). These are remarkable omissions indeed, since each occupies a central role in most religious systems, and one which was fully recognized in the writings of sociologists a hundred years ago, such as Weber and Durkheim.

The book's overall approach is defined by its author as "materialist". He draws heavily on the historical materialism of Marx, and, separately, of Engels, and full use is made of contemporary neo-Marxists, but the materialism of Weber and of Nietzsche also informs the approach. Employing this perspective, Turner provides a sustained critique of Durkheim and theories of religion which emphasize its cohesive functions in society. They fail to account for class and class conflict, and Turner gives a critical summary of those theories which see the social structure integrated "not by a common social cement, but by the narcotic effect of religion"; they ignore other sources of social cohesion, often material ones, and Turner discusses a variety of reasons why the decline of religion need not result in a society's "ultimate descent into anomy and social chaos"; and they are blind to the manifold disciplines which have emerged as secular transformations of asceticism and ritual. He goes on to discuss secularization in terms of the transition from one mode of production to another, the role of

individualism in the relationship between Protestantism and capitalism, and the place of religion in national and international political systems.

The account is littered with helpful references and illuminating asides. By the end, however, one doubts whether Turner is actually interested in the religion about which he has written so much, and whether he understands why it so fascinates some people. One sets out believing that the insights of modern sociological theory will be brought to bear on religion, and that a fresh understanding will be provided by Foucault, Poulantzas *et al*, but in the last pages it becomes plain that it is the importance of religion for sociological theory which excites the author, rather than vice versa.

The analysis of contemporary society by sociological theory leaves no room for religion. What does remain is without social significance. Take death as an example:

The problem of death has been solved, not by religious convictions, but by a system of secular practices which neutralise the horror of physical death. Mass death in a nuclear war is a constant anxiety, but not as yet a real experience. In a society dominated by the values of youthfulness and vitality, death has become an embarrassment rather than an ever-present facet of daily existence.

Leaving aside the unsubstantiated claim that "nuclear war is a constant anxiety" (to whom?), the whole discussion of death is pre-

viously bleak existence becomes a life crowded with incident: "flirty-fishing", "litnessing", "engram-auditing" or merely changing home, belief and partner at the leader's whistle; the good end happily, the bad unhappily - that is what Armageddon means.

Long on charisma, short on perspective and controversial on theory, not all the faults of this mine of information are the author's. Basic corrections, even friendly editorial advice, would have immeasurably improved Wallis's text; a chart listing backgrounds, places, leaders, ideologies, organization and recruitment for each group discussed would, for example, effectively have ended the infuriating buzz of repetition which brought to mind a wasp at a Sunday School picnic.

The first volumes in a promising and wide-ranging Geoffrey Chapman series called *Introducing Catholic Theology*, with general editor Michael Richards, each £7.95, are *Aylward Shorter's Revelation and its Interpretation* (277pp, 0 225 66356 2), *Gerald O'Collins's Interpreting Jesus* (214pp, 0 225 66357 0) and *Edmund Hill's Being Human: A biblical perspective* (320pp, 0 225 66358 9).

Salvation groupies

Barbara Godlee

ROY WALLIS
The Elementary Forms of the New Religious
Life
171pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £12.50.
0710098901

"The spirit of Durkheim is not dead", Roy Wallis announced in his 1976 *Observations on the Children of God*, and to prove it, he has adapted the title of the Master's seminal *Les Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* for his latest book. So does Wallis 1984 offer a modern gloss to an ancient debate? A quasi-Durkheimian critique of new transatlantic sects?

Not exactly, no; nor is his book an altogether satisfactory read. But if you are interested in the Higher Theory of Western religious association since the Second World War, then at least here is a book not easily put down: no sooner thrown to the floor for its hopeless style, language and grammar than picked up again for the fascination of its material.

Having cornered a market in American

sects, Wallis now contains their varied typology in a triangle. World affirmers (Scientologists) to the right; world rejecters (Krishna Consciousness) to the left; world accommodators (Neo-Pentecostals) at the apex; with "mixed cases" (Jesus People) "variously located within the conceptual space I have delimited to show the theoretically predictable properties resulting from conflicting orientation".

One may not care for this sort of language. Wallis's eighty-word sentences hardly flow sweetly off the page while his "visual representation of apparent contiguity" mode quite blots out the sunlight. But never mind. The question is, rather, should we allow sociologists of religion, overcome by galloping secularization, to include pseudo-psychanalytical cults in their brief? At this rate, they'll be exploiting the bullish situation of almost any transaction where two or three are gathered together. And, anyway, who exactly are "these people"? One longs to ask. But Wallis prefers the vaguer Los-Angeles-marginals and lower managerial-classes to statistics. The message remains: join a religious group offering sexual and organizational dynamism and your pre-

sented as an explanation, in terms of material changes, of the eclipse of religion. But death is a central motif within most religions as well as something explained (or not explained) by religion, and what Turner fails to give us is any historical and comparative account of the iconography of death in religious systems. Crucifix, *pieta*, and Wesleyan hymnology still survive and warrant his attention. The Holocaust has not yet been perceived as a religious problem, and that too deserves mention.

Those who are already sociologists will be grateful for Turner's book, for they will find it both provocative and informative. Those who wish to learn more about religion from a sociological perspective will be disappointed, however, for it is all sociological theory and no religion.

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96pp. Kestrel. £3.95 each.

This new fiction series, Kestrel Kites, has been carefully planned, the publishers proclaim, to provide "lively stories for beginner-readers who are starting to enjoy full-length books". They have "contemporary settings" and are "carefully geared to children's reading abilities and interests". In other words, they are conceived primarily as marketable teacher's aids, not as spontaneous works of the creative spirit, potential literature if only in a minor genre. Their efficacy as educational tools for teachers to decide, and we are concerned here only with their literary quality. After which ominous preamble let it be said at once, ungrudgingly, that all three writers have managed rather successfully to do as commissioned creative artists have done down the ages - they have contrived, without departing from the specifications, to produce something which is still unmistakably their own.

Humphrey Carpenter and Chris Powling favour the vein of hilarious fantasy. In the former's *Mr Majeika* we have a highly contemporary class-room comedy. The new teacher is a redundant magician, floating into school very late on a magic carpet. From that moment, however conscientiously he strives to avoid using his previous powers, his lapses are frequent enough to punctuate the term with unforeseen and embarrassing phenomena, causing espe-

cial bewilderment to the head teacher and vast, enjoyable discomfort to Hamish, teach, show-off and general class-nuisance. Such a theme demands a certain exuberance of vocabulary, and Mr Carpenter's quickly reassures us that the publishers' talk of "beginner-readers" and "reading abilities" is not going to restrict him to monotonous monosyllables. Pessimistically, but no doubt realistically, the beginners have been designated as "ages 7-10", and all three authors seem to have seized on the upper limit as a licence to use whatever words they need.

A bright, chatty style is favoured by Chris Powling - his opening line, "Hello!" is so hearty as to be slightly off-putting, but it may have the obviously intended effect of putting some hesitant readers more at ease. Some of us like to be jolled along, and that is Powling's way. His high spirits are infectious. He excels at that ingenious and inventive onomatopoeia to which most children dependably respond. His hero, Little Alpesh, is a Pakistani, in this simple fable of an (almost) unconquerable conker, which can demolish a multi-story car-park and sink a liner, but the multi-racial symbolism does not in the least spoil the simple fun.

The most appealing and least self-conscious of these stories is *Bright-Eye*, a quiet, down-to-earth, realistic tale of a schoolgirl on a mid-Welsh farm, who succeeds in hatching out a wild duck's egg and finally, with mixed emotions, sees her pet fly off to join the other mallards. There is exact and loving observation in this story - Mrs Morgan herself lives in the magical Upper Wye region - and the practical difficulties of hatching and rearing the duckling are not only of interest but are so effortlessly embodied in the plot that (together with the relationships of the girl, her father and her mother) they invest this simplest of themes with constant suspense.

Breaking the charm

James Campbell

DUNCAN WILLIAMSON
Fireside Tales of the Traveller Children
153pp. Edinburgh: Canongate. £5.95
(paperback £2.50).
086241 0479

Margaret Laidlaw, a ballad singer famous in her day, rebuked Walter Scott after he had collected some of her ballads in book form: "Ye hae broken the charm now, and they'll never be sung mair." She objected to Scott tinkering with her vocabulary and spelling and anyway saw no reason to transmit to the printed page something which had developed over centuries by word of mouth. Duncan Williamson, a traveller (or linker) now based in Fife, offers his twelve versions of folk tales in a printed form because he is unsure if his children will carry on the oral tradition by which he learned them. Margaret Laidlaw's worries about a broken charm do not seem to have troubled him, nor indeed his wife, an American postgraduate student, who recorded them and has kitted them out with footnotes (presumably for academics) and a glossary which is not only inaccurate but also implies that words which are a part of everyday speech in Scotland are "traveller's cant".

The title of *Fireside Tales of the Traveller Children* may suggest that these stories have a specific traveller content, whereas in fact they are merely versions of tales which will be familiar to most readers, of every age. Some of them contain no mention of traveller communities. For example, "The Hedgehog", in which a hedgehog-man by an act of heroism claims the daughter of a king, is clearly a variant of "The Frog Prince". "The Traveller Woman who Looked Back" has the same motif as the story of Lot's wife; "Jack and his Mother's Cloth" is of a type which found its finest expression in "Jack and the Beanstalk".

So much for the tales, but what about the teller? Some of Mr Williamson's renderings, such as that of "White Pet", are long-winded. (Williamson takes twice as long as the nineteenth-century teller in J.F. Campbell's *Popular Tales of the West Highlands*, without adding anything to the story.) More seriously,

most of his versions lack what is essential to such tales: a strong twist. The burker story is no more than an anecdote, and confusion is caused by introducing a supernatural element into a tale which otherwise emphasizes its realism; the same technique adds pathos to the story of Mary and her seal, in which the father kills the beast his daughter loves, but deprives it of a moral, which is also a major fault of the rendering of "The Hedgehog". The point of the frog prince type of story is surely that the princess transforms her husband into a handsome man through the sacrifice of loving him while he is still a frog. The girl in this version "covered her head with the blankets and buried her face in pillows because she thought he was coming to her", and she finally breaks the spell by simply consulting an old woman for advice. Not much of a spell, and not the stuff that enduring folk tales are made of.

Survival of the spirit through skills passed down to a new generation is the way Susan Varley has chosen to approach the subject of life after death in a new picture book, *Badger's Parting Gifts*. (Andersen. £4.95. 0 86264 062 8). She faces the subject squarely, yet the tone of her story is positive: "Badger wasn't afraid of death. Dying meant only that he would leave his body behind and, as his body didn't work as well as it had in days gone by, Badger wasn't too concerned about that." Badger, having written a letter to his friends, sits by the fire and dreams he is running faster and faster through the Long Tunnel. It was as if he had "fallen out of his body". Badger was happy to die - but all his friends mourn him through "a cold, hard winter". As spring approaches, however, they begin to talk about Badger with one another - how he taught Mole to make paper-chains, how he taught Fox to tie his tie, Mrs Rabbit to bake gingerbread. Soon they can remember Badger gratefully - and smile. Varley's text is sensitive, comforting, gentle; her ink and watercolour pictures lively and often humorous; though lacking the intimate knowledge of English woodland and moor that characterize the work of classic artists such as Potter, Shepard, in this genre. If death is to be "forgotten" for the young - and surely it should be since all children have to face up to it - this is one sensible and honest approach to it.

Science and society

Colin Greenland

AIDAN CHAMBERS (Editor)
Out of Time
155pp. Bodley Head. Paperback £3.95.
0370 605329

Out of Time is a collection of short stories, aimed at teenagers, on the future of the human race. The stories bristle with issues for discussion: Technology and the Urban Future; Nuclear Arms; the Individual and Society, but what little science there is is nonsense. Humans evolve into an aquatic species within a few generations, and still speak English; an alien firearm annihilates and restores matter; a computer program loops through time. There is no pretence that these fictions will introduce young minds to scientific method or even attitudes. Science remains mysterious, hermetic, magical.

This disproportion of scientific sense to moral and sociological sensibility is not peculiar to this selection. Perhaps the necessary simplifications of juvenile fiction cannot cope with the increasing complexity of science. When there were no moon-rockets it was possible to dream of building the first one in your garden shed; before research and development became a concern of institutions rather than individuals, it was not ludicrous to imagine nipping into the school stinks lab and whisking up a super hair-restorer. The one story in *Out of Time* which is about exactly that, is incongruous in the company. Joan Aiken's "The Blades", with its absent-minded professor and weedy boy genius, is deliberately ludicrous, but in a way that could amuse only an adult reader. In it schoolchildren call each other "old feller" and urge "Be a sport!"

Nothing about Jan Mark's "Captain Courage and the Rose Street Gang" is antique. Lance and Arty, named after characters in a soap opera called *The Dark Age Saga*, inhabit a "development" so huge and dilapidated that they haven't seen Rose Street itself for three years. The lifts may be called "elevation units", the phones "telecoms", but they're still out of order. Mark's story is funny, and finely judged: her future city is exactly as crummy as today's, no less, no more. Jill Paton Walsh's "Program Loop" is also a very treatment of a disturbing observation. Robert is wholly competent with his new computer, but looking after himself while Mum and Dad are away comes down to pilchard and peanut butter sandwiches "and a bottle of lumpy milk". Supernatural functions in the computer do not obscure Walsh's point; like Mark, she refrains from judgement and lets her readers draw their own conclusions.

Telling the tale

Idris Parry

HARRI WEBB
Tales From Wales
95pp. Granada. £4.95.
0246 120886

The source of these stories is not acknowledged, but many are abbreviated from fourteenth-century transcriptions first published in English translation by Lady Charlotte Guest in 1849 and called by her *The Mabinogion*. They are a mixture of mythological history and tales of Arthur, familiar in Wales. Other stories are similar to versions of traditional tales collected by John Rhys in the Welsh countryside a hundred years ago and published by him in *Celtic Folklore* (1901).

Running through all these tales is a thread of magic. A royal huntsman finds his game pursued by hounds of hell and changes places for a year with the king of the underworld; a beautiful girl emerges from a lake to marry a mortal and, by one of those dreaded but inevitable accidents of fairy-tale, is driven to leave him and return to her home under the water; a bridegroom joins the revels of the "little people" for a few days, but when he goes home he finds the house occupied by strangers who dimly remember that a man was supposed to have disappeared from this place on his wedding night several centuries before; then there's the

The anonymous boy in Ann Ruffell's "Red Piper" has to look after himself too. He gets up one morning to find not only Mum and Dad gone, but everyone else too. Unaware, he has become a specimen: by his behaviour in solitude the Guardians will decide whether or not to let the human race go on. There is no sentimentality in Ruffell's portrait of the fragility of socialization. The outcome is chilly but still ambiguous. Again, readers will take sides. For didacticism, turn to Louise Lawrence's two contributions. In "Extinction is Forever" a student travels in time to bring back a video of the world after nuclear holocaust. ("It took proof, not opinions, to convince governments.") "Rigel Light" is the story of a problem child in a brutally harsh space colony who falls in love with an alien slave. Both stories cover a lot of moral ground, private and public; both are wildly implausible but elegantly effective.

"Zone of Silence" by Monica Hughes is equally ambitious, but makes less fuss. Roger's mother is dead and his father has remarried, the wrong woman. Off-course, their rented plane is forced down in a Mexican desert by an electro-magnetic anomaly. Roger knew the danger zone was there, but they didn't listen when he tried to tell them. There is a monster at the bottom of the vortex... Hughes' attempt to equate Roger's increasing emotional isolation with this terrain from which no messages escape will test her reader's imaginative grasp. However, since Roger's problem is one he really can't do anything about, "Zone of Silence" remains a horror story, not a morality.

The stories by women are much the best. In comparison, the three stories by men are minor. In "Urn Burial", Robert Westall is, as ever, very strong on the hard rural detail but less so on the science fictional intrusion: here, the alien sarcophagus Ralph the young shepherd finds under a cairn. But the contact is sharp. Douglas Hill's "Holly's Paradise" tells of a weary old soldier of the galaxy whose retirement on a deserted planet is disturbed first by his discovery of an alien sculpture, and then by three criminals on the run; but it's hard to see how it matters much, except to Holly Christopher Leach's "In a Ship Called Darkness 3" is an episode of rebellion in the totalitarian future: admirably terse, but dependent on a surprise revelation that doesn't work. Major Stern is not really the resistance leader, whatever Leach says.

Out of Time should provoke much argument, except about its quality. I hope that the dominance of white male characters in eight out of ten stories will not close it to some of its potential readers.

wonderful tale of Blodeuwedd, the bride made of flowers, unfaithful to her husband and punished by being transformed into the scolding owl which hoots its melancholy in the dark.

These are great stories. All the material to strike the imagination is here, but unfortunately Harri Webb's treatment of magic is not magical. Reverence is no substitute for narrative tension. In his adaptations from *The Mabinogion* he takes over some of Lady Guest's phraseology. The result, confined to his contracted versions, is a "Lo and behold" style which muffs the impact. A certain rule is not the best of men, he is "the goodliest of men". The king is "minded to go hunting". People aren't dressed, they are clad in garments. There's even an infant "in swaddling clothes". People are seldom killed in this book; they are slain.

Archaisms do fall away somewhat in the stories which are not part of the *Mabinogion* sequence, but the reverential style continues. That important question "What happens next?" is not likely to press urgently on the child who has to listen to sentences like this: "The brethren were occupied not only with the disciplines necessary for deepening knowledge and understanding of the scriptures, they were also obliged to work hard to maintain the monastery by all the diligence of good husbandry; and by the practice of all the many other useful for survival."

Action and its attributes

Zygmunt Bauman

HELMUT R. WAGNER
Alfred Schutz: An intellectual biography
357pp. University of Chicago Press.
£23.80.
0226 869369

Alfred Schutz was never formally a part of the academic world, except for the last few years of his life (and even then only marginally); but he has become a frequently invoked authority or bugbear in the past decade or so, while many of his distinguished academic contemporaries have quietly sunk into oblivion. An Austrian, he wrote all his major works in German and remained all his life in the German *geisteswissenschaftliche* tradition. He had a very respectable legal, economic and philosophical training, but for most of his life he was a banker, and a dedicated and apparently successful one (his biographers have all been remarkably shy about this considerable chunk of their subject's life). He came to America not as an exiled academic, but as a representative of a versatile finance company seeking a secure foothold away from warring Europe. While remaining in the service of the company, he also joined (gradually and reluctantly) the New School for Social Research, at that time a marginal, though in no sense undistinguished, academic institution, which served mostly as a haven for intellectual refugees, where they could fight out in style their unfinished European battles. Only during the last three years of his life (1957-9) were his teaching commitments increased to two classes a week.

The three scholars who taught Schutz most were von Mises, a philosophizing economist; Kelsen, a philosopher of law; and - last but certainly not least - Edmund Husserl. None of these, be it noted, was a sociologist. Mises and Kelsen had little use for sociology while Husserl was committed to undermining the "naïve attitude" to phenomena which had made the practice of social science possible. Yet Schutz, their composite disciple, defined his own *milieu* as sociology, a decision which acknowledged his debt to Max Weber, whose writings had triggered off his life-long preoccupation with "social action".

All his life Schutz struggled with a single problem: how is social action possible? What conditions must be met for it to be possible? It goes without saying that paramount among such conditions is our immersion in the "natural attitude" (whereby "I take for granted that my fellow-men exist, that they act upon me as I act upon them" etc) - that is, in the very "superstition of the fact" which Husserl considered to be the most harmful obstacle to the philosophical pursuit of truth. But sociologists, American ones in particular, could hardly be impressed by this challenge to Husserl when they had never themselves had to pass through the Husserlian "transcendental reduction". As a sociologist among philosophers and a phenomenologist among sociologists Schutz found

it difficult to endear himself to either camp. Helmut Wagner treats the disagreement with Husserl in so anodyne a way that an unwar reader would scarcely conclude that the rift was just as fundamental as that which prompted Husserl publicly to repudiate Heidegger. After all, both Heidegger and Schutz proclaimed the unthinkability, or irrelevance, of existence in its hypothetical pre-"inter-subjective" form, thereby ruling out of order the very exploration around which Husserl organized his life-project. And as if this were not offence enough, Schutz's analytical practice added another heresy: he substituted "how" questions (eg, how do members of a society understand each other? how do they typify each other? how do they transform their own "in-order-to" motives into someone else's "because-of" motives?) for Husserl's search after essences, after the "whatness" of things. Finally, Schutz's project, again in jarring contradiction to Husserl's central purpose, was wilfully indifferent to the truth or falsity of the way in which members of society, immersed as they are in the "natural attitude", piece together their picture of reality. He was not concerned about what in the beliefs of lay members of an inter-subjective community is true, but about the devices they employ in order to believe that something is true, or how the truth itself comes to be employed as a resource.

The gap dividing Schutz from Parsons (and, by extension, from the main body of American sociology of the time) was no easier to bridge. Reading again the famous exchange between the two, one wonders whether Parsons was, after all, much more clear-headed than his correspondent. Their explorations began at different locations and pointed in opposite directions. For Parsons, social action was the primary "given", and in itself essentially unproblematic. The real problem was, assuming the irredeemably voluntaristic nature of human action, to solve the Hobbesian puzzle: of how society (as a normative order) is possible? For Schutz it was society (as an "intersubjective life-world", supported by a "common stock of knowledge") which was given, and defined as "matter-of-fact". The problem was, instead: assuming the ubiquitous presence (and authority) of "common-sense constructs", which "determine their [human beings'] behaviour, define the goals of their action, the means available for attaining them", to solve the puzzle of purposeful and meaningful human action.

Schutz's opposition to Parsons determined his posthumous fate and fame. During the first decade after his death, he was - almost overnight - drawn out from obscurity and hoisted into the very centre of American sociological debate, first by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann's *Social Construction of Reality* - perhaps the single most influential sociological book of the 1960s - and then by Harold Garfinkel's *Studies in Ethnomethodology*, the manifesto of a brand-new, California-style sociology, which inflated the imagination of the "me-generation" and had, by the mid-

1970s, firmly established the cult of Schutz, with all the usual orthodoxies, heresies and schisms. Both these movements were, first and foremost, anti-Parsonian rebellions, and both employed Schutz as the patron saint of a new sociology distinguished above all by being Parsons-free.

Unless the circumstances of a theory's reception are unrelated to the substance of that theory and hence irrelevant to the interpretation of its meaning (a bizarre supposition, indeed), this anti-Parsonian context must be an important factor in the interpretation of Schutz's work. Schutz's own youthful resolutions and later re-articulations of his original purposes are not in themselves enough to explain the sudden eruption of his work into prominence in the late 1960s, the enthusiasm with which it was received or the form in which it has been incorporated into the canon of today's social science. The Schutzian boom cannot be seriously interpreted with no more than a passing reference to the socio-cultural and political trends of the period. It was, indeed, the "me-generation" which embraced Schutz fully and uncritically, living through this embrace as a symbolic act of both theoretical and political self-definition. The Schutzian uni-verse, organized around the notion of the "knowledgeable actor" and ordered according to this actor's life-project and its "topical relevances", seemed perfectly geared to that generation's disenchantment with the system and the "power power", to its celebration of intimacy, and its dream of substituting the cosiness of domestic candlelight for the indiscriminate blaze of the sun. Now that the "me-generation" is sinking slowly in the moving sands of universal depression, or otherwise wilting in the heat of the sun which stubbornly refused to set - is it likely to take Schutz with it? In other words, was his sociological eminence a mere episode?

Wagner's answer to that would, I think, be an emphatic, and indignant "no". He is eminently qualified to write a definitive biography of Schutz. He has an exhaustive knowledge of his published and unpublished writings, and also had the excruciating task of preparing some of Schutz's manuscripts for publication; and he has for his acknowledged mentor more than the ordinary measure of respect and sympathy. Indeed, Wagner's biography of Schutz is a labour of love, rich in detail, evidencing a dedicated effort at empathy. Like other labours of love, however, it is also fraught with solemn, sometimes unctuous phrases, and disarmingly uncritical of its subject. It ends with a credo and an exhortation: "His work stands before us, his successors, not as a monument but as a task and a mandate. What he began, we will have to continue." But who are we? Generous in naming Schutz's predecessors and contemporaries, Wagner is frugal in recognizing his successors. He ignores most of the writings through which sociologists of today have learnt of Schutz's work; and he makes no reference to Anthony Giddens, who has done more than anyone to incorporate

Schutz into the main body of modern social theory.

It would be foolish to deny that Schutz brought about a considerable widening of vision and advance in self-understanding in social sciences. Before his work became widely available, the "ordinary" sociologist rarely concerned himself with the nature or mechanism of "habitual knowledge", or, more generally, with the "natural attitude" itself, and was thus only too liable to mistake what ought to be the topic of his research for a resource. That sociology by and large has progressed beyond this stage of theoretical naivety, is in no small measure Schutz's achievement. This does not mean, however, that sociology should confine its specific tasks and activities within the rather narrow limits of Schutz's personal concerns.

Those concerns are narrow, and unabashedly formal. Schutzian research does not even try to understand why this or that element of a given social reality is as it is and not otherwise. It is unconcerned with the "whatness" of things. Neither is it particularly keen to understand a historically given cultural object in its uniqueness, which was the meaning of "understanding" as conceived by historical hermeneutics and, indeed, of the "understanding sociology" proposed and developed by Max Weber. If a Schutzian sociologist is pressed to offer such understanding, he will have nothing specifically "Schutzian" to propose; he will need to resort to quite "traditional" historical-causal hypotheses.

Wagner insists that Schutz's life-work was a development of Weber's seminal ideas: the spelling out of Weber's equivocalities, the clarifications of his conception of a sociology of understanding, and the tracing of the implications of its key terms. This is certainly true, but what such a characterization leaves out is that the "sharpening up" of Weberian terms was associated in Schutz's work with a considerable impoverishment of Weber's sociological project. To define action in terms of the actor's meaning was not, for Weber, an exercise in mere philosophical refinement, but a way of laying foundations for the paramount, explanatory function of his sociology. Nothing of this is left in Schutz: Weberian means become Schutz's ends, methodology turns into ontology.

Thus, to return to my original question. Schutz's influence on the methodology of social science was not a mere episode; his reception as the great reformer who would turn sociology away from the erroneous ways of the past was, however. Now that the "me-generation" mist is gradually clearing, sociology is likely to return in earnest to its legitimate and important business. In this, Weber, with his broad historical vision and the urge to understand the "whatness" of social realities will serve as a much better guide than Schutz, whose attention was absorbed by the task of clarifying the attributes of action, a form of sociology too general to account for any of the alarming and fascinating transformations occurring in the real world outside.

Compulsorily caring

Andrew Brown

PHILIPPE MEYER
The Child and the State: The intervention of the state in family life
Translated by Judith Ennew and Janet Lloyd
128pp. Cambridge University Press. £18.50
(paperback, £5.95).
0521 24871 X

Philippe Meyer has set out to demonstrate, or at least to assert, that the influence of the State on society is something almost wholly evil, that the State is out to "exterminate society". This is an interesting idea, and one attractive to anyone who has ever seen a block of council flats. Any modern state has totalitarian tendencies, because it has potentially totalitarian powers, and it is easy enough to pretend that all employees of the state are part of a malignant conspiracy against civilized life. It is even easier to believe this when the employees involved are social workers. But M Meyer regularly goes too far. He writes social history as military history, used to be written authoritatively

commands and is obeyed, and that is the end of the story.

The Child and the State gains momentum, precision, and interest, however, as it changes from a discussion of the sociology of architecture into a history of the ways in which the French law on children has steadily increased the power of the state and made it more arbitrary. Most important has been the substitution of care for punishment. This makes possible the indeterminate sentence, which may be altered, revoked, or made more severe at any time. And of course measures of care can be applied without dreary necessity of proving that crime has been committed.

The first director of Supervised Education in France wrote in 1946 that: "Delinquent minors, pre-delinquents, physically and morally abandoned children, victimised children, all belong to the same family; they are all irregular or maladjusted... whether or not they have actually committed any offence, the nature of these children is the same, and they are amenable to the same remedies." One has only to imagine the legal consequences that would follow from the invention of the "pre-criminal

adult", to be treated in the same way as a criminal, "whether or not they have committed any offence", to realize to what extent the idea of care is incompatible with that of justice.

When care is substituted for punishment, funny things happen to the rules of evidence, too. Meyer points out that while you can prove that you have not committed a crime, it is quite impossible to show that you have "satisfactorily resolved your Oedipus Complex" or that you have "provided an identificatory focus for your child".

But there is a lack of proportion in Meyer's argument, a flaw that is a direct consequence of his preference for the sweeping, romantic view of the State. Once you have established that any child is at risk from the powers of social workers, it follows that the application of these powers is bound to be arbitrary. Even in Sweden, which has the highest proportion of children in care, and of social workers, of any country in the world, two thirds of all children born can expect to grow up without ever coming to the attention of social workers. Given the jargon, it would be easy enough to prove that all of them should be taken into care, but

they are not, and this is not solely a result of the shortage of foster-parents. The State is not a single, homogeneous body animated by a single purpose, any more than an army is. Meyer is too conscientious not to show that the powers of the State that he finds objectionable are arbitrary by their very nature. So are the standards that the State seeks to impose. Spanking your children may be brutality in Nottingham, and family therapy in Northampton. But once Meyer has established these facts, he prefers to ignore them, since they suggest that history is neither as dramatic nor as unambiguous as he would like it to be.

The second, contemporary part of the book announces itself as: "A detailed study of the social work of the State, and its constant efforts to do away with the plurality of different forms of life..." Unaffected by utilitarian sociological considerations, a layman's impartial view may discover the day-by-day triviality of this process of destruction. The case-studies from the Douai area that make up most of this section are interesting, but I am afraid that M Meyer has here succeeded only too well in his impartial quest for triviality.

Malevolencies

Christopher Hawtree

PAUL BINDING
Harmonica's Bridegroom
 191pp. Aidan Ellis. £7.95.
 085628 1352

"Above the white pseudo-Baroque towers and haughty roof-top statues of central Madrid the sky was like velvet." On the ground, Dan Varney, who is in the city to deliver a paper at a 1981 conference on speech defects, chances to hear on the night air the sound of a harmonica, which interrupts thoughts of his as-yet enigmatic younger brother. The young musician "was slim, dark and neatly dressed, and he gave Dan a darling look in which appraisal and enticement were equally combined". The dusky youth turns out to be twenty-four and English. Their lengthy conversation, which takes place against shouts from Fascists preparing for the next day's rally, is surprisingly stilted. "An hour later Kevin was lying naked on top of the double bed in Dan's hotel room, composing himself for the pleasurable charged moments before love-making began."

A few pages later Dan wakes to find that Kevin, for whom "each sexual experience had come to seem . . . like sending a bucket of fresh water far down into some deep well fed by secret and inexhaustible springs", has gone. The harmonica which is left behind turns out to have belonged to Dan's brother James. Past events are disjointedly revealed, and one soon tires of the instrument and all that its rasping sound entails; each further disclosure of the relations between Dan and his schoolfriends of some twenty years before takes one by surprise, but none gives the sort of delight that accompanies genuine insight.

Dan is the son of a world-loathing author - Pappa - obsessed with an odd mixture of Teutonic order and the beauty of the surrounding Oxfordshire countryside, who, breakfast barely over, would slope off to his *magnum opus* on "Shakespeare. Not having published for

years, he survived at the Cedars on his dwindling competence and, until her death twenty years before, on his wife's earnings; thus he pattered through a work on Sir Thomas Browne. His own death occurs six months before the novel opens, and his scathing attitude towards James becomes clearer as it progresses. His only friend in Tanbury had been a priest, Father Lallard, to whom James is returning on the day Dan is in Madrid. At school Dan, Jason and Richard were dubbed the "Unholy Trinity". Each in his way, Dan now reflects, has come to devote himself to language: Richard, who, as chance has it, is also due in Madrid this busy weekend, lectures in Philology; Jason "lives by its deployment in the interests of the most vivid communication of current topics" - a splenetic, bisexual hack, he wrote the *Observer* article a year before which killed Pappa and drove James mad. As a malevolent schoolboy he discovered that Pappa had been a Mosleyite author in the 1930s. The later use of this knowledge, augmented by help from his unwitting assistant, Kevin (who turns out to be Father Lallard's nephew), was a hideous trick to play on James. The latter had returned to relative tranquillity after a lengthy period, beginning in 1975, when Dan paid for his trip to America in a doomed, alcoholic bid for harmonica-playing stardom. Such are the events that lead Dan and a reluctant Richard on a tour of Madrid's clubs and bars in search of Kevin and the answers to it all. Meanwhile Jason and his pregnant wife have bought the Cedars. James crouches outside, watching.

Reduced to its plot Paul Binding's novel seems preposterous. Its final effect is something like that anyway. Aiming at tragedy, but trapped in a prose larded with exclamation marks and as cloying as it is lacking in rhythm, *Harmonica's Bridegroom* remains a farago. If Pappa had seen the praise elicited for it from James Purdy and Brian Moore in the trade journals, he might have remembered Johnson's "Life of Browne": "the reciprocal civility of authors is one of the most risible scenes in the farce of life".

Contrition's utmost throw

Toby Fitton

DAVID HUGHES
The Pork Butcher
 122pp. Constable. £5.95.
 0094655 103

David Hughes accomplishes a great deal in a highly efficient short narrative. Where others might have been tempted to spread out his tale of belated repentance for a wartime atrocity to a fat novel, *The Pork Butcher* achieves memorable effects by its tight structure and spare narration.

Ernst Kestner, a corpulent, widowed pork butcher from Lübeck, sentenced to imminent death from lung cancer, makes a long-postponed journey to the scene of the one memorable incident of his unattractive life. He visits the ruins of a village whose 700 inhabitants were massacred by the German occupying forces of the Second World War. He was one of the troops who obeyed the brutal orders with a cool efficiency that demands an almost ceremonial repentance forty years later.

Lascaud is now a place of pilgrimage, a shrine where a mournful industry of commemoration flourishes for all France. Kestner has deeper reasons for his visit than dutiful repayment of a national debt. For Lascaud was the one place where in all his dreary existence he ever knew success and satisfaction in love. Nostalgia for an illicit love affair with an amorous Frenchwoman married to a Resistance fighter gives his journey a special poignancy - emotion recollected with all the urgency a doctor's fatal diagnosis can give it.

Confession, both private and public, is necessary. Kestner is accompanied by his daughter Tina, whose unloving marriage to a Paris antique dealer echoes his own; and who has an asperity of mind which matches her father's sullen rudeness. A close relationship between them, established in the nursery, is soon revived into an intimacy deep enough to

sustain the narrative of love, death and betrayal that forms the main private burden of the story. The dying man's desire to bequeath these memories to his only child gives his revelations a thrilled tone which rings true.

A public act of contrition is required also, and the mayor of a neighbourhood town is sought out as auditor. Though surrounded by droll functionaries who recall obstructive officials in Richard Cobb's occasional essays, he is no ordinary mayor, but a socialist Deputy, minor literary figure, statesman in the making (and on the make) whose involvement in Kestner's instant revelations could have serious implications for his career. For his private life, too, as his own family was wiped out at Lascaud and Kestner's story, revealing itself layer by layer, seems to be entwined more and more with a past he believed himself to have erased from his own successfully reconstructed existence.

The interplay of Kestner the butcher and Lorian the Deputy is skillfully managed, and even the device used to keep the daughter out of the way when they confront each other alone - a rapid and unexpected love affair - is made plausible; her own discovery of love parallels her father's forty years before. The dénouement is crisply and credibly managed, with few loose ends in incident, feeling, or psychology.

Of Making Many Books There Is No End

A day of tourism and sleepy pears. The pub by the river have closed their terrace so we sit in the lounge. The angel fish are out of puff to blow us the kisses they so try to, exhausted gaiety girls

LAUREN MAGKINNON

Gathering the clan

Joy Grant

VAL MULKERNS
The Summerhouse
 138pp. John Murray. £7.95.
 0719541344

It was certainly not mutual affection that brought four generations of the O'Donohue family together summer after summer in the old-fashioned, unchanging house in Ferrycarrig, a County Cork harbour town. Rather, they were drawn by clannish pride and sibling sympathy - on the whole convincingly portrayed by Val Mulkerns in her clear-eyed study of a family that rose in one bound from peasant poverty to middle-class prosperity. Scholastic success, which had put the founding father on the upward path, duly became a prime target for his children. And they were expected to make "good" marriages, in which regard if any of them failed, blame was cast upon the luckless in-law: a young wife was obliged to flee the house for having the wrong religion and an un- Irish Christian name, and a husband permanently downgraded because he hailed from the paupers' end of town.

Five members of the clan reminisce in turn. A cantankerous stay-at-home spinster, with a passion (sympathetically conveyed) for cats, has a sharp turn of phrase and a pronounced brogue. (Mulkerns would have done well to differentiate more - in rhythm, vocabulary and idiom - the speech of the rest.) A youngish daughter lingers at home, too crushed to turn on the mother who despises her for failing to be pretty, clever, or male. Contrariwise, a husband's maleness seems to constitute a major offence in his wife's eyes - she cannot bear his touch; he, unaggressive to a degree, with bare-

ly enough coin in his pocket to buy a friend's second drink, is hardly credible as the former high-ranking diplomat he's supposed to be. Then there is a couple belonging to the post-Second World War generation who "go away from religion, conventional morality, sacred cows of all kinds". Dublin-educated, registry office-married after a period of living together, they are "free souls" who come and go and "the house at Ferrycarrig never touches them".

There are good (Irish) moments; some, but not enough, use is made of the possibilities for irony in multiple narration. The object of a savage verbal attack, who appears astonishingly unmoved, himself describes the scene as "viciously traumatic", and in so doing reveals the cause of his impassivity; a male's apology for his sexual arousal in late middle age contrasts with a female observer's tart comment "goat's gaze". More of this sort of thing would have brought variety and spice to a somewhat homogeneous dish.

Mulkerns has been praised for her restraint, and rightly so; in *The Summerhouse*, however, to counteract the mellowing effect of recent storytelling, and to avoid a certain lassiness, rather more abandon and rather less restraint were required. As it is, some light dramatic, beautifully thought-out scenes do release the appropriate emotional charge. Mulkerns makes delicate use of symbolism: do-it-yourself freetown summerhouse, for instance, abandoned in the Ferrycarrig kitchen, useless peace-offering from an errant son; the goldfish bowls kept by a lonely girl, quite emblematic of her aimless, circumscribed existence. Many of the subtleties reveal themselves only on second reading - a backhanded compliment, probably, in a fiction-crammed hurried world.

The mythy-minded mix

Neville Shack

DAVID LLEWELLYN BURDETT
Hix Nix Six Pix
 338pp. Cape. £8.95.
 0224020234

Each time a star is born, another one wanes in the painted firmament. The Hollywood mythology has a relentlessness of its own, giving way only to sordid reality and the special hell located in that infernal city, Hollywood Babylon. But for a story simply to reduce the dream factory to life-like dimensions of sadomasochism and degradation would now involve clichés as worn as those of glamour and chic in the California sun; they have all been seen many times before, not least in the movies themselves.

David Llewellyn Burdett manages to avoid the more obvious traps in this picaresque adventure set during the heyday of motion pictures by being as faithful to a fairy-tale scheme as the subject-matter allows. Many of the features are almost endearingly familiar: a phillistine movie-mogul whose auditions with would-be starlets give him the chance for some erotic stimulation on the side; a leading-lady ("over-exposed and underdeveloped" like a poor photo) chaperoned by a vampish mother; garish décor; plenty of opportunities for personal damnation and, correspondingly, some very false salvation.

The most reassuring cliché must be that of

the star on his downward slide. Phillip Inshroin (the name itself defies Hollywood conventions) inevitably drinks himself to death, but gains a dubious wisdom in the process. His constant wisecracks and home-spun advice make him appear a Groucho Marx with straight gait and a capacity for heroism. When he retreats to the stage and Shakespearean grandiloquence the old man can only flounder; his best performances are strictly off-stage, finding a slightly more tolerant audience.

Inshroin's odd flirtation with radical politics brings Nemesis even nearer. The scrapes that he gets into are part of the actor's complex destiny as he battles with the caricatures all around, and serves as one himself. He craves about on the screen of the novel, a very brief projection of celluloid elements: one-dimensional, with a lot of resilience and charm for back-up.

The prose generally rides along fast, as if delighted by the thrills it describes. The devil style of depicting the American extravaganza hardly new by any means, and draws from a rich vein of Pynchonesque precedents. The method of having historical figures interwoven with fictional ones is also well-established. Here we have Winston Churchill, Salvador Dali and the future Duke of Windsor playing cameo parts. However strange the fiction, you can expect life to make common cause; and vice versa.

This cross-over between the composed truths of Hollywood and the Real World becomes more pronounced throughout the book. In some effectively sketched sequences Philip is shown conjuring up the dark forces which will attack humanity, while in America Burdett accuses Hollywood of complicity with those same wicked trends. The campaign to end Poverty in California comes unstick with more than a little help from Hollywood's dirty tricks department. Finally, the era's wildest confusion between light and shadow, truth and falsehood, fiction and life - sanctioned by cinema - get their epigraph from Goebbels, no less.

There are times when the documentary "normas" don't quite fit with the story at hand, and appear a little gratuitous; they occasionally force an argument which you feel has already been worked into the fabric of an entertaining narrative. The case for the prosecution against pre-war Hollywood stands regardless.

Unsuitable for adults

Laura Marcus

SYBILLE BEDFORD
A Legacy
 288pp. Flamingo. £2.50.
 0 00 654 052 X
A Favourite of The Gods
 312pp. Virago. £3.50.
 086068 3877
A Compass Error
 221pp. Virago. £2.95.
 086068 3885

In *A Legacy*, Sybille Bedford's best-known novel, now reissued by Flamingo, the author successfully interweaves personal and political history and, although her characters are somewhat stylized, the hectic atmosphere of Edwardian Germany is convincingly portrayed. The novel's tone is sufficiently ironic to check Bedford's tendencies towards melodrama, its plot sufficiently compelling to sustain interest in the complexities of family connections and intrigue. Unfortunately this partial success is not repeated in *A Favourite of the Gods* or its sequel *A Compass Error*, first published in 1963 and 1968 respectively. The two novels tell the stories of three generations of women: the imperious Anna, an American heiress who marries an Italian prince, her beautiful and ebullient daughter Constanza and her granddaughter Flavia, heroine of *A Compass Error* and occasionally glimpsed as narrator of both works.

A Favourite of The Gods is set in a would-be Jamesian world of Italian villas and smart London residences, and spans some thirty years from the late nineteenth century to the 1920s. The novel's ostensible themes are the weighty ones of affairs, betrayals, sexual jealousy and sexual knowledge, and the retrospective narrative structure allows an air of dark, portentous mystery to hang over the details of all these. "It

was in the autumn following the old prince's death that Anna became involved in the rather mysterious episode that is said to have affected her so much. What exactly happened nobody does know as Anna never told the whole truth to anyone." One suspects that Bedford wouldn't know what happened either, and that beneath the thin surface of her prose, praised by Peter Vansittart in his earnest introductions to these Virago reprints for its allusiveness and opacity, lies nothing very much at all. We are told, for example, that both Anna and Constanza engage in anti-fascist activities, but the nature of these is apparently so secret that neither the narrator nor the author seems to know anything about them. What we are given is a lot of banal pontificating about politics (Constanza is a socialist), the war (Anna and Constanza are pacifists), life and love (Constanza is a hedonist). Life itself is absent from the novel.

A Compass Error is seemingly more overt, and belongs to the "suddenly that summer" school of fiction. The seventeen-year-old Flavia, alone in the South of France after Constanza has left with her new man, Michel, studies for Oxford Entrance and experiments with "the sensual life". She is taken to bed by the bohemian Therese, loses her virginity to a young Frenchman in a few shifty lines between her consumption of a brandy and soda and two large ham sandwiches, and falls in love with the beautiful and enigmatic Andrée. Flavia's affair with Therese becomes the excuse for a monologue taking up a quarter of the novel, in which Flavia recounts the histories of her grandmother, her mother and herself, and during which Therese, understandably, falls asleep. Ostensibly Flavia's attempt to make sense of her history, the speech seems rather to be Bedford's way of providing a synopsis of *A Favourite of the Gods* for those who haven't

read it. The past over with, Bedford embarks on some syrup-thick plotting which has its climax in a scene that does not fall short of the ludicrous: Andrée reveals to Flavia that she is Michel's estranged and vengeful wife, bent on preventing Michel and Constanza from marrying: "I haven't crushed you yet", she announces to Flavia. Flavia takes all this very badly; so badly, indeed, that, so the epilogue informs us, she ends up marrying a homosexual painter and never makes it to Oxford.

This is probably a good thing, as Flavia would no doubt have drunk too much had she got there. Like her deceased father, Simon, who "had known the classification of the *Médoc Crus* by heart and would recite them like so many lines of poetry", Flavia is a wine-buff. So is Bedford. In *A Favourite of the Gods* we are told that on Christmas Eve Constanza and Anna "drove to midnight mass, and on their return there was very hot *soupe à l'oignon gratinée* and some vintage champagne. (Since it is always a pleasure to record such things: it was Krug 1904, and because of the onion soup it was Extra-Dry, not Brut, and there was as much of it as anyone might drink)." This fantasy of surfeit irresistibly brings to mind a connoisseur's version of a dorm-fest with lashings of ginger-beer, perhaps because there is finally something irredeemably immature about Bedford's imagination. This is revealed in the gloating greediness about food and drink; in the intrigues, sexual and political, the portrayal of which is uninformed by knowledge or insight and develops upon the guilty pleasures of "being found out"; in the apocalyptic sense of events from which characters never recover; in the characterization of the love objects, Andrée the wicked witch, Therese the comforting mother. Bedford's settings may be those of sophisticated society but her fictional world is unsuitable for adults.

A. N. WILSON. *Wise Virgin*. 199pp. Penguin. £1.95. 0 14 006661 6. □ At the centre of A. N. Wilson's novel (published in 1982) are a medieval manuscript, *A Treatise of Lone Heuvelliche*, and its editor and interpreter, Giles Fox, who is unfortunately afflicted with blindness before he can complete the work. The doings of Giles's daughter Tibba, and of his literary assistant Miss Agar (to say nothing of the deaths, in succession, of both his wives), help to turn *Wise Virgin* into a polished comedy of misfortunes.

E. H. YOUNG. *The Misses Mallett*. 256pp. 0 80608 441 5. *Miss Mole*. 288pp. 0 80608 431 8. Virago. £3.50 each. □ *The Misses Mallett* (1922) is a very dull novel; old-fashioned, pedestrian, uneconomical and bland. It deals with some decorous attachments, emotional and romantic. Two sisters, a stepsister and niece are the characters indicated by the title. They are all greatly taken up with their inner feelings. *Miss Mole* (1930), about a whimsical housekeeper in the family of a clergyman, is a rather more interesting and entertaining work, even if its sprightliness of tone becomes a bit wearisome in the end. The doings of Hannah Mole, admired by the author for her ability to laugh at herself and others, are presented with sufficient clarity and assurance to make them memorable, and the small social proprieties peculiar to Radstowe (Bristol) are well observed too.

DAVID LODGE. *Ginger, You're Barmy*. 210pp. Penguin. £1.95. 0 14 006640 3. □ At the start of David Lodge's second novel, first published in 1962, a group of conscripts assembles at Dartington Station on the way to a training camp. These are the mid-1950s, and a two-year period of National Service is still imposed on male school-leavers and others up to the age of twenty or thereabouts. Lodge's charming narrator, Jonathan Browne, has acquired a university degree. In fact, by the time he's called up and finds himself transported to a world of bluster, rowdiness and pointless regulation. His flamboyant friend Mike, the "Ginger" of the title, finds his own way of acting subversively, while cautious Jonathan sticks to the middle of the road. Mild and invigorating.

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